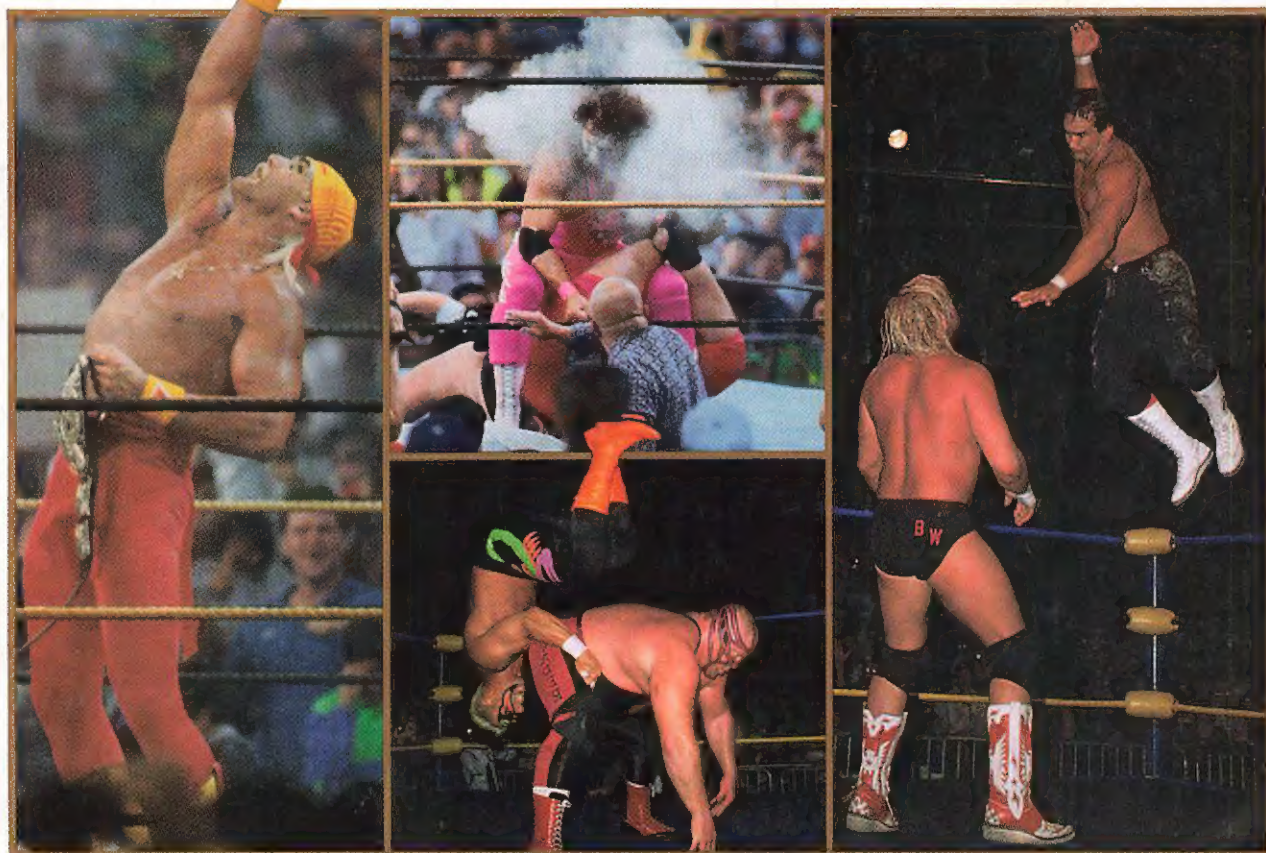


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AUGUST 1993

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Excitement abounded when the stars of WCW came to New York City. By the end of the night, the fans of the Big Apple had seen a whole new side of the sport

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It is always the WWF's biggest card of the year and once again there were plenty of stories behind the headlines

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WrestleMania IX was a joyous occasion for many, but not for the toga-clad Bobby Heenan, who definitely does not want to be riding a camel to his ringside broadcasting position. To see who the real winners and losers were at the WWF mega-event, turn to page 34.



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from the desk of...

Stuart M. Saks

From the west side of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated's* fifth-floor office in Rockville Centre, Long Island, I can see the Manhattan skyline so clearly, I can almost get emotional about the city I so detest. It's filthy, it's ridden with crime, it's crowded. But as I admire the majesty of the Empire State Building from the safety provided by a distance of 20 miles, I think: *It's filthy because it's in constant use, it's ridden with crime because its 24 square miles or so provides enough space for every type of human (or sub-human), it's crowded because so many people want to be there.*

Tony Anthony wants to be there. At least he says he does. As you will read in the story by Dave Rosenbaum beginning on page 50, Anthony, who's as southern as ham hocks and black-eyed peas, has turned in his gray uniform for blue. And, being a "Yankee," he might even throw in some pinstripes for good measure. Born and raised in Bucksport, Tennessee, Anthony claims his heart is 150 miles north of the Mason-Dixon line in the city they call Gotham. He's a New Yorker now, even though the wrestling federation where he is plying his trade is based in Tennessee and never strays from its narrow confines.

Anthony is just a spit-stirrer—has been and always will be. If he can find a way to make people despise him, he'll do it. Even after he turned good several years back, it later became clear that he did so just to make it that much more exasperating when he turned back into the "Dirty White Boy." But now he's taken his ob-session to a new level. He's not only turning off the Southern fans and his opponents, he's upset men who share a locker room with him.

One, who requested to remain nameless here but indicated that when he's ready to go public with his complaints, he'll "do it with a right cross to the chin," said: "Anthony's crossed the line. You don't cross your own people. When it's all over and he asks us to forgive him, he's going to find out something that he should have known all along: Southern people don't forget."

And when he's run out of the South, he had better not seek refuge here. New York doesn't want him, either.

New York does want WCW, however. Manhattan recently welcomed the second of the Big Two wrestling federations for the first time since the formation of the WWF 30 years ago. The April 14 card at Madison Square Garden's newly renovated Paramount

(Continued on page 76)

If you can answer the following questions, you could be the next

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Actual questions

Which young WCW star is known as "The Natural"?

- 1) Steve Austin
- 2) Scotty the Body
- 3) Dustin Rhodes
- 4) Robert Redford

Who portrayed Thunderlips in the film *Rocky III*?

- 1) Hulk Hogan
- 2) Lou Albano
- 3) Jesse Ventura
- 4) Rick Martel

Which of the following wrestlers is "Ravishing"?

- 1) Ron Ritchie
- 2) Dusty Rhodes
- 3) Rick Steamboat
- 4) Rick Rude

True or False: Jesse Ventura was a member of the elite Navy Seals?

- 1) True
- 2) False

How did you do?

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FLAIR'S FLAIR

The June 1993 issue featured the cover story, "Ric Flair's Hellish Homecoming: Why All of WCW Wants To Destroy the 'Nature Boy.'" Of course, whenever Flair is the topic, wrestling fans are never without an opinion.

"There was a little rain falling on [Barry] Windham's parade when he defeated The Great Muta for the NWA belt. That rain was the return of Ric Flair," wrote Doug Garrison of Old Bridge, New Jersey. "He is jealous of Flair and worried that Ric will take the belt back that he wore throughout the 1980s."

"Now that Flair has returned to WCW, expect him to dominate," wrote Lenny Thurston of Charlotte, North Carolina. "The 'Nature Boy' is still among the best wrestlers in the world, and no one in the sport plays the mind game better than him."

Of course, Flair has his many detractors as well.

"Flair is a has-been who is using his past achievements to keep himself in the limelight," voiced Karen Hinson of Silver Spring, Maryland.



"Narcissist" Lex Luger is both admired by fans who believe he'll soon win the WWF World title, or vilified by those who think he's just too full of himself to succeed.

LAY OFF LUGER ...

I have to disagree with Craig Peters' "In Focus" in the June 1993 issue. Lex Luger will not be a WWF failure. Luger is one of my favorite wrestlers, even though I do not usually support rulebreakers. Luger undoubtedly has the size, skills, and strength to capture the WWF World title.

His track record is outstanding: One WCW World title, four U.S. titles, and one World tag team title. Now, Luger has more experience and ring skills than ever.

Once Luger returns to top form, he should be one of the WWF's elite for quite some time.

JOHN CHOVANES
Leechburgh, PA

OR LAY IT ON THICK

Craig Peters' "In Focus" was right on the money. Lex Luger will most definitely flop in the WWF. His sissified behavior is unbelievable. No wonder Curt Hennig calls him "Nar-Sissy." His mirror-gazing and preening is far worse than Shawn Michaels' ever was.

Luger has to be one of the most shallow, insipid, and vapid personalities in the sport. That "Narcissist" moniker is absolutely repugnant and makes me want to puke. Of course, I'm sure it was Bobby "Brainless" Heenan who thought of it. But no matter. My prediction is that this silly, asinine gimmick will vaporize fast, and so will Luger, before year's end.

RITA M. BUDA
Chicago, IL

A FORCE OF ONE

Big Van Vader is the most awesome athlete in the sport today. Big Van Vader is the most underrated athlete in the sport today. The article in the June 1993 issue, "Has Harley Race Lost Control Of Big Van Vader?", discusses the destruction Vader is capable of, with or without manager Harley Race.

Watching Big Van Vader wrestle the past three years, I believe he could be just as great on his own. Vader is a three-time WCW World champion. It is Vader's sweat and blood that have been expended to accomplish this. Sure, Vader has learned well from Race, a seven-time NWA champion, but it is now obvious that Vader no longer needs Race to win.

Vader has demolished top stars like Sting, Rick Steamboat, Dustin Rhodes, and Ron Simmons. It is obvious that Big Van Vader has the best of both worlds. He is awesome with or without his manager.

STAN R. LENKIEWICZ
Paramus, NJ

☎ SHERRI VS. LUNA

The proposed women's match in the May 1993 issue ("Madusa & Sensational Sherri: Let's Hook 'Em Up!") is intriguing. However, after watching WrestleMania, it appears that Sherri has another problem on her hands: Luna Vachon.

After being kicked repeatedly and bodyslammed by Luna, I'm



Sherri will deal strongly with Luna Vachon, says PWI Hotline contributor Sheila McAdams.

sure Sherri wants to even the score. Although she affiliates herself with fan favorites these days—usually, whichever fan favorite happens to be wrestling Shawn Michaels—we know that she has a rulebreaker's streak in her. Those fans who don't believe Sherri has what it takes to take care of Vachon are in for a big surprise.

SHEILA McADAMS
Dallas, TX

REMEMBER WHEN?

In "Scouting Reports" in the May 1993 issue, your examination of Yokozuna asked, "Has Mr. Fuji managed anyone successfully?" The answer to that question is yes! Mr. Fuji led the original Demolition—Ax and Smash—to the WWF World tag team title at WrestleMania IV. And you guys criticize the WWF for not acknowledging the past!

JIM IMBRUGLIA
Medford, MA

HULKSTER OR HUCKSTER?

Well, Hulk Hogan has returned to the WWF, seen his shadow, and now there will be nine more years of Hulkamania. Yes, WrestleMania IX has come and gone, leaving its mark on wrestling history, and a thorn in everyone's side.

(Continued on page 72)

10 YEARS AGO IN PWI



The cover of the August 1983 issue featured Roddy Piper, and offered PWI readers an opportunity to win a telephone call from the "Rowdy Scot." Entrants had to compose, in 50 words or less, a completion to this opening statement. "It is important that I talk to Roddy Piper because..." Piper, incidentally, had nearly crippled Charlie Cook with his piledriver.

The centerfold featured Larry Zbyszko, who had taken to calling himself "The New Living Legend." Zbyszko, a 10-year veteran at the time, had just returned to the sport. He worked out a deal with Killer Brooks that allowed him to purchase the Georgia National belt from him for \$25,000 if Brooks upset Paul Orndorff for the title, which he did.

Elsewhere in the magazine: An accompanying editorial called Zbyszko's dealings "reprehensible" and demanded that he be stripped of the title and fined, appropriately, \$25,000... Craig Peters' "In Focus" contained an item about Bill Apter's wedding and honeymoon. Now there's wrestling news... Mr. Wrestling II agreed to sit down for a "Press Conference," but would not take off his mask. Some of Wrestling II's masks had been stolen and defaced, and he took that as personal defamation... The series of matches between NWA champion Ric Flair and Rick Steamboat were analyzed in "Friendly Rivalry Or Bitter Feud." Of course, we now know that it was the latter, and not the former.

RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter

MISSY HYATT SEEMINGLY has her eyes on managing **Ric Flair** (see "Press Conference" on page 26), but the "Nature Boy" has been concentrating lately on broadening his skills in Hyatt's current career: television commentary.

Flair's "A Flair for the Gold" segment on WCW telecasts is already a raging success with WCW fans, many of whom were ecstatic over the longtime rulebreaker's return from the WWF. And although it seems certain Flair will eventually return to the ring, there's a good chance he'll split his time between TV and a quest for a 10th World championship.

"I'm having a good time, but then again, I always have a good time," Flair said. "I'll return to the ring when I'm ready and not before then. As for Missy, you can tell her that her job is in danger."

During a card in Columbus, Georgia, Flair interviewed **Big Van Vader** and **Harley Race** about **Davey Boy Smith**. On another, he



Although he has yet to step through the ropes, former WCW World champion Ric Flair commands the attention and respect of fans and fellow wrestlers. His "Flair For The Gold" TV segments have become required viewing for those who demand to know the "Nature Boy's" next move.

telephoned **Barry Windham** in an attempt to clear the air. Windham and Flair have been at odds since **The Four Horsemen** broke up in 1991.

Flair was scheduled to make his New York debut with a segment at The Paramount on April 14, but failed to show because his plane had mechanical problems.

Flair's interview with Vader widened some eyes. Vader is WCW World champion and Flair surely won't hesitate to challenge him upon returning to the ring.

"Flair might have been trying to pick Vader's brain," a WCW source said. "That was one of the concerns WCW officials had when they were considering whether to give the seg-

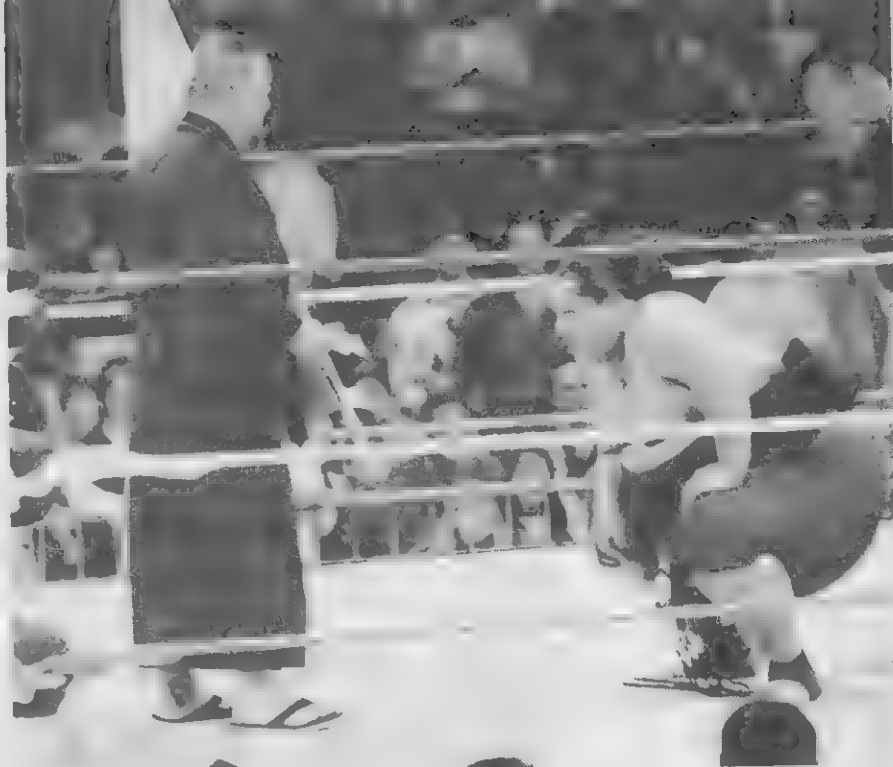


In 1987, Flair feuded intensely with Barry Windham. That feud could resume at any moment, even though in the past they were teammates in The Four Horsemen.

ment to Flair. Journalists have access to information that wrestlers don't, and they didn't want to give Flair an unfair advantage."

Mr. Fuji still hasn't learned his lesson. The devious manager once again caused **Yokozuna's** disqualification with his salt-throwing tactics. This time it happened in Sheffield, England, when "**Hacksaw**" **Jim Duggan** pinned Yokozuna in under two minutes.

Yokozuna, who kicked off the WWF's European tour with wins over Duggan in Paris, France, and in Bournemouth and Exeter, England, had Duggan tied up near the ropes when Mr. Fuji reached into his jacket pocket for a handful of salt. When Fuji tossed the salt in Duggan's direction, Hacksaw ducked and the salt blinded Yokozuna. Duggan easily covered him for the pin.



There is talk of dissension between Yokozuna and his manager, Mr. Fuji. Aside from what happened at WrestleMania IX, the sumo warrior was angered by Fuji's interference in his matches in Europe.



Hacksaw Duggan will not allow Yokozuna to crush his spirit. He rebounded from the injuries Yokozuna caused him and scored a key win over the massive rulebreaker in England.

Identical tactics by Fuji cost Yokozuna the World title at WrestleMania IX, just over two minutes after he won the belt from **Bret Hart**. Now rumors are circulating that the Japanese sumo master is angry with his manager. Days later in Madrid, Spain, a WWF correspondent saw Yokozuna splash wine in Fuji's face while they were dining at an outdoor cafe.

At press time, Smoky Mountain TV champion **Bobby Eaton** was on the verge of making his Japanese debut for the New Japan federation. "Most people think I've wrestled there, but I haven't," Eaton said. **2 Cold Scorpio**, who has been there before, will also wrestle on the card.

Arn Anderson continued his one-man war against Eaton in Smoky Mountain Wrestling. On a card in Pikeville, Kentucky, Anderson teamed with former rivals **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** in a three-way match against **The Heavenly Bodies** and **The Stud Stable**.

During the match, Anderson crawled under the ring, emerged with a fire extinguisher, and used it to spray Eaton, **Tom Prichard**, and

(Continued on page 70)

MR. FUJI proved it conclusively at WrestleMania IX: He is the worst manager in the sport today.

You all know the story. His man Yokozuna, the 505-pound sumo-trained terror, had just defeated "Hitman" Bret Hart to capture the WWF World championship, doing so only after Fuji tossed salt in Bret's face while he had Yokozuna trapped in a "sharpshooter" leglock.

Yokozuna's victory was Fuji's crowning triumph. Finally, he had his first World champion after a decade of managing in the WWF.

Then he did something amazingly stupid. After Hulk Hogan came to ringside to offer Hart assistance, Fuji challenged the "Hulkster" to a title match right there. Hogan needed less than 30 seconds to pin Yokozuna, who

clearly was exhausted and in no shape to wrestle. Of course, it didn't help that Fuji had accidentally thrown salt in his own wrestler's face. Instant karma got him.

In the days following the incredible event, Fuji protested, claiming

the title change should be invalidated because there officially was no match contract. WWF President Jack Tunney ruled that Fuji's challenge comprised a binding verbal contract. The result would stand. Hogan was champion.

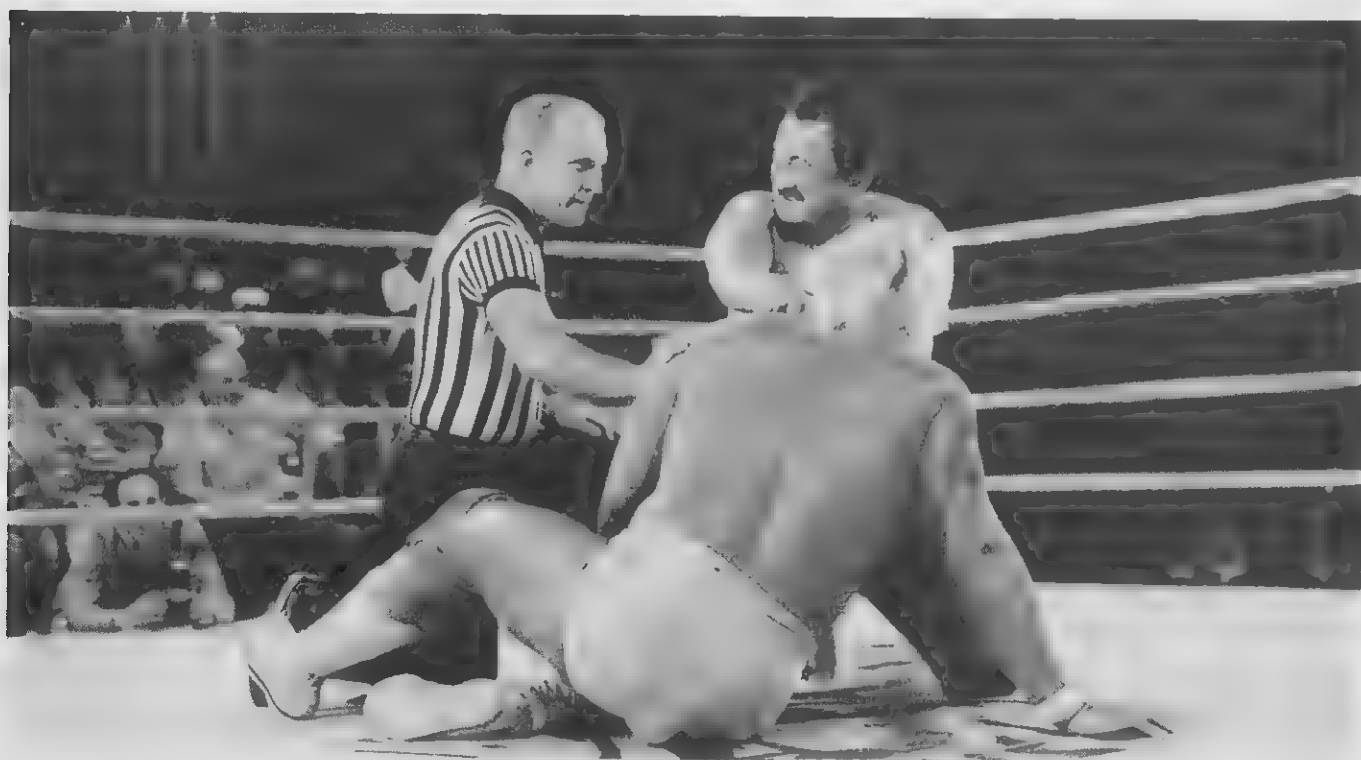
Fuji was a champion, too. A champion fool.

All Fuji had to do was walk out of the ring and today Yokozuna would be champion of the world. Fuji could have come out of this WrestleMania looking like a hero; instead, he is covered with deserved humiliation.

Neither Fuji's detractors nor his admirers are surprised. The picture that emerges is one of a man who strives for success, but continually squanders his opportunities.

A prime example: In 1985, Fuji
(Continued on page 74)

**WIN
LOSE
DRAW**
BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ



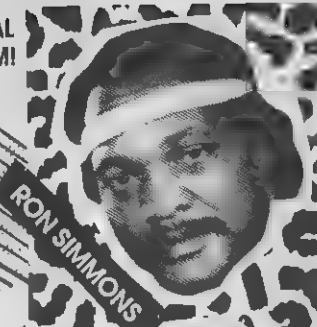
Mr. Fuji despises Hulk Hogan, so much so that he has opposed him in the ring as well as taunted him as a manager. Fuji's hatred of the "Hulkster" led him to give Hulk an impromptu World title match at WrestleMania.

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WRESTLING FOCUS

WITH CRAIG PETERS

THE RETURN OF WOMEN'S WRESTLING ... NOT!

I can't believe the result that I see on the desk in front of me: "USWA, Memphis, Tennessee: Sensational Sherri wins the USWA women's title from Miss Texas."

Imagine that. I didn't even know there was a USWA women's title.

Okay, that's a little flip. I knew there was a title, of course, but the fact of the matter is that nobody takes it seriously, with the possible exception of Miss Texas and Lauren Davenport. And my guess is that even they would acknowledge that they're certainly nowhere near the caliber of, say, Madusa Miceli or Sasha or Bambi or Peggy Lee Leather or Debbie Malenko or Wendi Richter or Aja Kong or Manami Toyota or ...

Well, you get the idea.

But apparently Sherri doesn't. She takes the USWA women's title seriously enough to want to challenge for, capture, and defend the title. It all seems rather odd to me, since Sherri was, at one time, a very well respected competitor, a former AWA World women's champion who held that title in



Sensational Sherri

1986 and 1987 and brought some real attention to the ladies of the mat.

Unfortunately, the only attention she's drawing right now is on the level of the Missy Hyatt-Dark Jour-

ney bouts of a few years back. Too bad.

And a real revival of women's wrestling waits in the wings.

And waits ...

And waits ...

WHAT MAKES YOU WANT TO SEE WRESTLING?

From time to time, "In Focus" tries to survey *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* readers on various topics: How many hours of wrestling per month you watch, your likes and dislikes about this magazine, and so forth.

This month, I'd like you to do a little bit of soul-searching and answer the following questions:

What makes you tune in to wrestling on television?

What makes you attend wrestling in the arenas?

I found myself thinking about these questions recently in the wake of WCW's first-ever appearance in New York City in April (previous New York-area appear-

ances had been in New Jersey and on Long Island). The Paramount, a building adjacent to Madison Square Garden, was about two-thirds full.

Two-thirds!

This stunned me. I would have guessed that fans would be falling over each other to grab tickets to this event. After all, our daily mailbag is packed with letters along these lines: *WWF is a circus. I wish WCW would come to my town. Given a choice between Doink and Ric Flair, who do you think I'd rather see?*

And so on. Yet when WCW—apparently the preferred federation among our readers by about

a 10 percent margin, according to previous reader surveys—comes to New York, the most densely populated area of the country, what happens?

Two-thirds.

I can't figure it out, but maybe you can. Give it some real thought: What compels you to tune in to wrestling on TV or to go buy a ticket to the matches? What things keep you away from TV or the arena? Is it strictly a lack of spending money, or is it more? Let me know, and I'll let *PWI* readers know. Mail your comments to: "In Focus" Survey c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, Box 956, Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, 19034.

TWO BY TWO

There seems to be a proliferation lately of tag teams where you can't tell one member from the other: The Cole Brothers and The Wrecking Crew in WCW; The Harris Twins in the WWF.

"It's a real problem," said WCW's senior referee, Nick Patrick. "I've refereed matches involving the Coles and the Crew, and I have to confess that it's extremely difficult keeping track of them. Frankly, with those teams, I go more by the actual tags that are made than trying to distinguish the particular man who is in the ring."

Patrick acknowledges that keeping track of tags to determine who is the legal man in the ring can lead to problems.

"There is always the possibility that I might miss a tag while trying to deal with some other aspect of a tag team match," Patrick said, "and unscrupulous teams have been known to make illegal tags behind a referee's



The Harris Twins

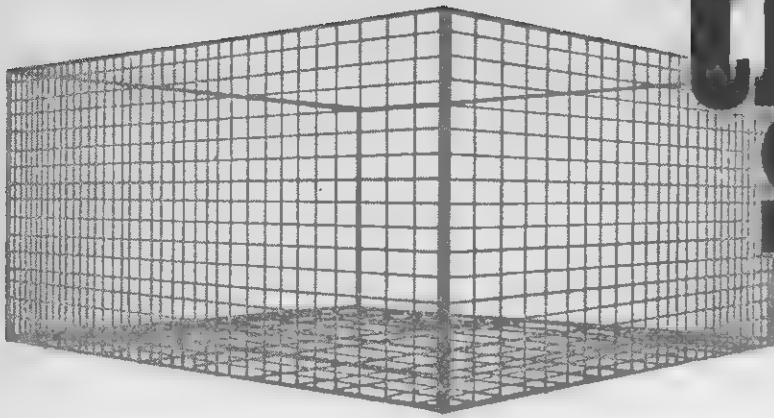
back. It has been an occasional favorite of masked teams in particular in the past."

What are the solutions?

"Video replay, second or third referees around the ring—the usual answers," Patrick says. "Unfortunately, those require rules changes, and that's about as

easy as changing the U.S. Constitution."

Should illegal partner exchanges abound where these teams are concerned, perhaps some of Patrick's solutions will have to be implemented, at least temporarily. Meanwhile, keep a sharp eye on these duos—if you can! □



the steel cage

ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE. Last October, London Publishing was bought by a publishing magnate, who is moving the company from suburban Rockville Centre, New York, to his sprawling estate in rural Ambler, Pennsylvania.

All of us were offered the opportunity to move with the company and retain our positions. We were provided with a trip to Ambler to examine the operation, ask questions, and determine if it was worthwhile.

I'm not going.

I am a city boy. I was born in Queens and raised in Brooklyn. I am pushing 30 years old and I don't know how to drive, nor do I have an immediate desire to learn. In New York, that's not strange. That's smart.

New York has majestic skylines and dirty subways and seven pro sports teams and racial tension and first-run films and a crack epidemic and homemade pasta and an awful mayor and espresso bars and crooked cops and pulsating nightclubs and too much noise and beautiful women and automatic weapons and elegant brownstones and a crumbling economy.

Ambler has sheep.

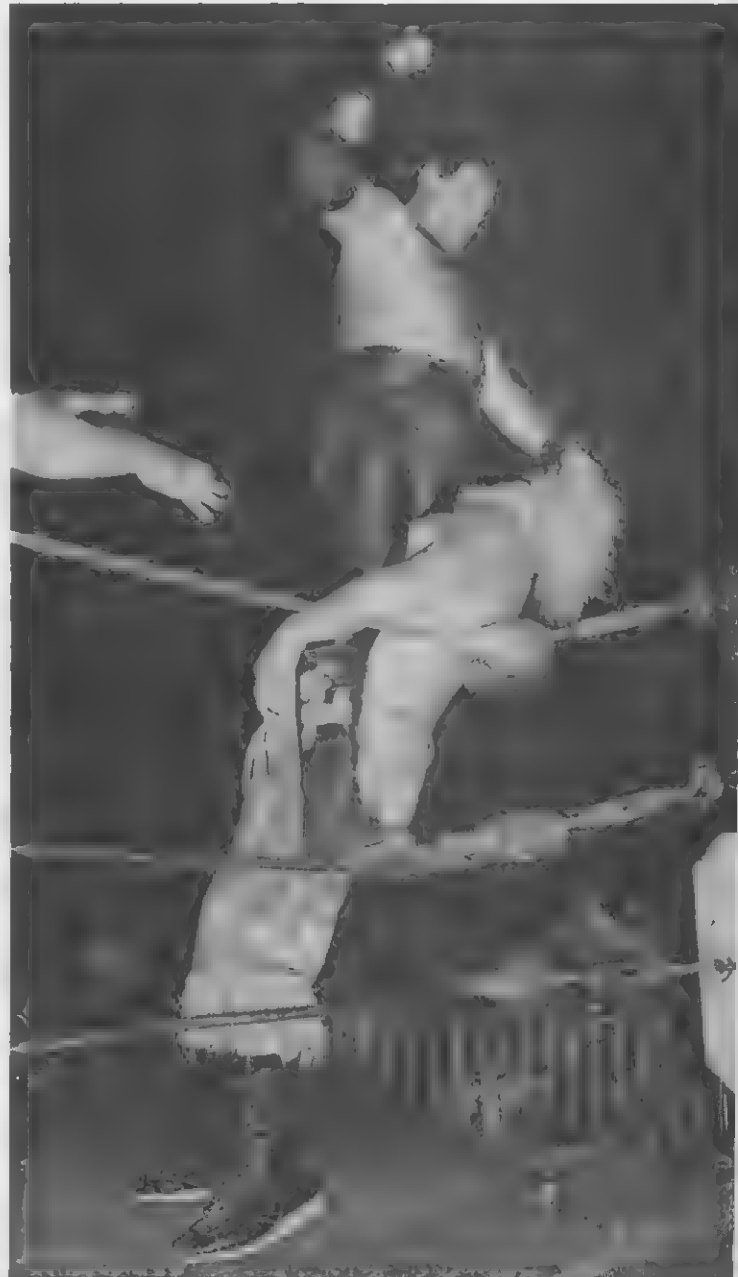
I will continue to write for *PWI*, as well as its sister publications. But I will remain based in Brooklyn. From there, I won't have to deal with any of what you are about to read.

8:53 a.m. I arrive 23 minutes tardy and stop at the receptionist's desk. She hands me a message with a six-digit phone number and asks, "Late?" No, dear, I'm just very early for tomorrow.

9:07 a.m. Senior Writer Eddie Ellner sends in one of his features for *Wrestling 93: Rulebreaker*. It takes nearly an hour to strip it of potential lawsuit material and correct the typographical errors. As colleague Jeff Ryan once put it, I never knew editing could be a contact sport.

9:38 a.m. Correspondent Mark Mitchell calls Associate Editor Andy Rodriguez to report on the previous night's USWA card.

9:41 a.m. Correspondent Mark Mitchell calls Senior



Jerry Lawler mounts the turnbuckles to pound away on Moondog Spike, and correspondent Mark Mitchell is there taking notes. His phone call would come to our editorial offices the next morning at 9:41.



"Sgt. Slaughter: Fat Sack of Shiite!" was one headline you never saw. "Ron Simmons: The First Black Ex-Champion" didn't make it, either.

Editor Bill Apter to check if Rodriguez has told him what happened on the previous night's USWA card.

10:03 a.m. Cigarette break. Nicotine relaxes me and allows me to think better. Of course, so do the pictures on my wall of supermodels Cindy Crawford, Claudia Schiffer, and Anna Nicole Smith.

10:11 a.m. Headline meeting. At least once a week, the wrestling braintrust gathers and comes up with headlines and ideas for our feature stories. These meetings usually take an hour, unless Bill is on one of his nostalgia kicks. The entire staff then bombards Bill's bald skull with foam baseballs and knocks him back into this decade.

Some of the best headlines we've come up with are ones you've never seen in our magazine. During Sgt. Slaughter's rulebreaking days, former Managing Editor Bob Smith blurted out, "Sgt. Slaughter: Fat Sack Of Shiite." One of my personal favorites was "Ron Simmons: The First Black Ex-Champion."

11:20 a.m. Art Associate Joe Kalman wanders into the editorial department. I think Joe used to work at Hallmark, because he always says "Greetings." He also attacks free food with a voracity normally displayed by grizzly bears.

Twenty-five years ago, Joe defected from Czechoslovakia. Apparently, management threatened to return him to his home country if he did not make the move. He is the only non-management employee who has decided to relocate.

12:26 p.m. "Lunchtime!" shouts Editor-in-Chief Craig Peters, and the office slowly empties. Having been entranced by the ethnic aromas of the city, I am utterly amazed at what suburbanites consider to be good food. I have been here for 18 months and have yet to have good pizza or fried rice.

1:04 p.m. I return from lunch to find Photo Editor Al Bello in the conference room, watching a videotape of the most recent episode of *Beverly Hills, 90210*. We agree that Dylan McKay is cooler than the other side of the pillow.

2:17 p.m. Associate Publisher Stu Saks has a brief meeting with President Ken Gudaitis. You know it's an important meeting because Ken's door is closed. When the door is open, you can hear him all over the building; Ken has a speaking voice louder than some airplanes.

2:32 p.m. *Hockey Stars* Editor-in-Chief Dave Rosenbaum calls to confirm that we have received his feature stories via computer modem. I worry about Dave. He is a diehard New York Rangers fan and lives in Troy, a dreary town in upstate New York. That lethal combination is enough to put him on suicide watch.

2:45 p.m. When colleague Bobby Cassidy is away from his desk, I usually answer his phone for him.

"This is Oscar De La Hoya. Can I please speak with Bobby Cassidy?"

De La Hoya, who hails from the barrio of Los Angeles, is one of the toughest young lightweights in the world. However, his high-pitched voice gives the impression that he has just finished playing with his dolls.

2:52 p.m. Cigarette break.

3:14 p.m. Book check. In the publishing industry, magazines are called "books." When each book has been entirely written, laid out, proofread, and fitted for captions, we have a book check. Stu, Craig, Andy, and myself go into the art department and give each page one final look.

It is at this stage where we usually find a word in four-inch type misspelled. Or a photo that's older than the founder of the company. Or a story that continues on a page devoted to an advertisement.

4:58 p.m. Time to go. I light a cigarette as I exit the building and use the five-minute walk to the Long Island Rail Road station to think about being my own boss, sleeping late, and working on my tan.

Yeah, working freelance might not be so bad. □

BY EDDIE ELLNER

off the Top Rope

If you wish to contribute to Ellner's mailbag,
send your letters to:



TOP ROPE, Box 956, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

[Editor's Note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Eddie Ellner himself. They do not necessarily represent the editorial views of this magazine.]

HULK HOGAN IS a close personal friend of mine. He and I take long strolls through public parks where people scream his name. They cry, "Hulk, Hulk," and deep inside a warm feeling overwhelms me.

Hulk Hogan, he's a friend of mine, a good friend. I was there when he rode his all-terrain 22-speed bicycle across Lake Michigan. Also, it was I who drove him to the Gulf of Mexico, which he parted and then treated every resident of New Orleans to a fish dinner by rubbing two index fingers together.

I like Hulk. And I warned him. I said, "Hulk, get too close to that burning bush and all your hair will fall off." But he didn't listen. It doesn't matter. I still like him and wouldn't betray him for all the pieces of silver in the world.

Dear Eddie,

When are you going to wake up and smell the coffee? It's time for a fresh perspective. Kick out the tired old reporters you have and hire some of your readers! Besides myself, I recommend Rita M. Buda, Richard Evans, and Phil Bruno. Their letters, which



Scott Steiner's "Frankensteiner" is an excellent finishing maneuver, but is any finisher more skillfully executed than Hulk Hogan's mighty legdrop?

often appear in your column and elsewhere in your family of magazines, offer intelligent and complex analyses of pro wrestling. Show some guts, Eddie. You're the only one who has any, and it must get lonely.

BILLY EDWARDS
Richmond, CA

Dear Billy,

At present, our research department needs assistance on its Jekyll and Hyde project, comparing hair loss between Bill Apter and His Excellence, Mr. Hulk Hogan. Unfortunately, the handwriting analyses of the readers you suggested indicate a predisposition to violent anti-Hogan behavior. Their names have been forwarded to their

local precincts and the FBI. But you, little Billy, passed with flying colors. When can you start?

Dear Eddie,

Let's consider the infamous finishing maneuver of Scott Steiner. While there is no doubt Steiner is a superior grappler, what's so spectacular about the "Frankensteiner"? I think it's been awfully overrated. To me, a real finishing maneuver is Chris Adams' savage kick or Steve Williams' Oklahoma stampede. Your opinion?

ROBERT WILLIAMS
Herts, England

Dear Bob,

While the maneuvers you speak of
(Continued on page 82)

60 WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. AIRPLANE SPIN
2. ARMBAR
3. ARMDRAG
4. ARMLOCK
5. ARM STRETCH
6. ARM WHIP
7. ASIAN SPIKE
8. BEAR HUG
9. BITING
10. BODY SLAM
11. BODY TACKLE
12. CHICKEN WING
13. CHOKE
14. CLAW
15. CLOTHESLINE
16. CROSS BODY BLOCK
17. DOUBLE-AXE HANDLE
18. DROP KICK
19. EAGLE SPLIT
20. ELBOW SMASH
21. EYE GOUGE
22. FACE RAKE
23. FIREMAN'S CARRY RAM
24. FLYING BODY PRESS
25. FLYING CLOTHESLINE
26. FLYING DROP KICK
27. FLYING ELBOW DROP
28. FLYING HEAD BUTT
29. FLYING MARE
30. FOREARM SMASH
31. FOREIGN OBJECT
32. FULL NELSON
33. GIANT SWING
34. GRAPEVINE
35. HAIR PULLING
36. HAMMERLOCK
37. HEAD LOCK
38. HEAD STOMP
39. HEART PUNCH
40. HIP ROLL
41. IRISH WHIP
42. KNEE DROP
43. LEGLOCK
44. MANAGER INTERFERENCE
45. MONKEY FLIP
46. OVERHEAD TOSS
47. POLE RAM
48. REVERSE CHINLOCK
49. ROLLING SCISSORS
50. ROPE BURN
51. SAVATE KICK
52. SCISSORS GRIP
53. SHOULDER BREAKER
54. SLINGSHOT
55. SNAP MARE
56. STEP-OVER TOE HOLD
57. SUPLEX
58. SURFBOARD
59. TURNBUCKLE SMASH
60. WRISTLOCK

30 SET-UP HOLDS

61. ABDOMINAL STRETCH
62. ATOMIC DROP
63. AVALANCHE
64. BACKBREAKER
65. BACKROLL PRESS
66. BELLY TO BELLY
67. BIG SPLASH
68. BOSTON CRAB
69. BRAIN BUSTER
70. BULLDOG
71. CAMEL CLUTCH
72. COBRA CLUTCH
73. CRADLE
74. CRUCIFIX
75. D D T
76. FIGURE FOUR
77. FLYING LEG DROP
78. GOURD BUSTER
79. INDIAN DEATH LOCK
80. NECKBREAKER
81. PILEDRIVER
82. POWER BOMB
83. POWER SLAM
84. RUSSIAN SICKLE
85. SLEEPER
86. SLINGSHOT SUPLEX
87. SMALL PACKAGE
88. SPINE BUSTER
89. SUNSET FLIP
90. SUPERPLEX

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NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

I wish to join ☐ NEW LEAGUE ☐ ACTIVE LEAGUE ☐ NO PREFERENCE

WRESTLER'S NAME (NO ACTUAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES, PLEASE)

WRESTLER'S HEIGHT

WRESTLER'S WEIGHT

MANAGER'S NAME (IF NOT YOU)

WRESTLER'S SPECIAL GIMMICK

PW10693

FINISHING HOLD

Wear-Down Holds: choose 10 from the list of 60 shown at left. List them in order. Use each only once.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Set-Up Holds: choose 5 from the list of 30 shown at left. List them in order. Use each only once.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Finishing Hold: create "custom" final maneuver or choose a hold from either list shown at left. Limit the length to 20 letters and spaces:

Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

PWI's TOP 10



Curt Hennig

TOP 10

- 1 BIG VAN VADER**
404, Denver, CO
(2) WCW World champion
- 2 STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
(3) No. 2 contender: WCW title
- 3 BRET HART**
235, Calgary, Alberta
(1) WWF World champion
- 4 DUSTIN RHODES**
254, Austin, TX
(4) WCW U.S. champion
- 5 SHAWN MICHAELS**
260, Miami, FL
(-) WWF Intercontinental champion
- 6 CURT HENNIG**
240, Minneapolis, MN
(-) No. 1 contender: IC title
- 7 BARRY WINDHAM**
263, Sweetwater, TX
(8) NWA champion
- 8 RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
(-) No. 4 contender: WCW title
- 9 JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
(7) USWA champion
- 10 TRACEY SMOTHERS**
227, Atlanta, GA
(-) Smoky Mountain champion

TAG TEAMS

- 1 STEVE AUSTIN & BRIAN PILLMAN**
Combined weight: 467 pounds
(1) WCW World tag team champions
- 2 MONEY INC.**
Combined weight: 492 pounds
(2) WWF World tag team champions
- 3 RICK & SCOTT STEINER**
Combined weight: 483 pounds
(3) No. 1 contenders: WWF tag title
- 4 THE HEADSHRINKERS**
Combined weight: 520 pounds
(5) No. 2 contenders: WWF tag title
- 5 RICK STEAMBOAT & SHANE DOUGLAS**
Combined weight: 461 pounds
(4) No. 1 contenders: WCW tag title
- 6 THE HEAVENLY BODIES**
Combined weight: 445 pounds
(6) Smoky Mountain tag team champions
- 7 STEVE DOLL & REX KING**
Combined weight: 477 pounds
(-) USWA tag team champions
- 8 2 COLD SCORPIO & MARCUS BAGWELL**
Combined weight: 460 pounds
(8) No. 2 contenders: WCW tag title
- 9 THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: SMW tag title
- 10 THE HARRIS TWINS**
Combined weight: 560 pounds
(9) No. 3 contenders: WWF tag title

WCW

World Champion:
BIG VAN VADER

(C) 404, Denver, CO

- 1—DUSTIN RHODES**
(1) 254, Austin, TX
- 2—STING**
(2) 260, Venice Beach, CA
- 3—BARRY WINDHAM**
(4) 263, Sweetwater, TX
- 4—RICK RUDE**
(6) 246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 5—PAUL ORNDORFF**
(3) 253, Brandon, FL
- 6—VAN HAMMER**
(7) 290, New York, NY
- 7—MAXX PAYNE**
(9) 350, Iowa City, IA
- 8—CACTUS JACK**
(10) 304, Truth or Cons., NM
- 9—DAVEY BOY SMITH**
(5) 245, Leeds, England
- 10—2 COLD SCORPIO**
(8) 222, Denver, CO

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN

(-) 300, Venice Beach, CA

- 1—SHAWN MICHAELS**
(1) 220, San Antonio, TX
- 2—BRET HART**
(C) 235, Calgary, Alberta
- 3—YOKOZUNA**
(3) 505, Samoa
- 4—CURT HENNIG**
(-) 240, Minneapolis, MN
- 5—TATANKA**
(4) 260, Miami, FL
- 6—THE UNDERTAKER**
(2) 320, parts unknown
- 7—DOINK**
(6) 236, parts unknown
- 8—GIANT GONZALES**
(-) 435, Argentina
- 9—BAM BAM BIGELOW**
(7) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 10—LEX LUGER**
(8) 290, Chicago, IL

GLOBAL

North American Champion:
STEVIE RAY

(C) 265, Dallas, TX

- 1—ANGEL**
(-) 310, Los Angeles, CA
- 2—TERRY SIMMS**
(8) 220, San Francisco, CA
- 3—STEVEN DANE**
(10) 232, Dallas, TX
- 4—BLACK BART**
(2) 261, Pampa, TX
- 5—JOHNNY MANTELL**
(-) 260, Dallas, TX
- 6—SWEET DADDY FALCONE**
(1) 245, Dallas, TX
- 7—AL PEREZ**
(-) 238, Tampa, FL
- 8—BAM BAM RICHARDSON**
(-) 280, Dallas, TX
- 9—CHAZ TAYLOR**
(9) 225, Houston, TX
- 10—BULLMAN DOWNS**
(-) 250, Dallas, TX

USWA

USWA Champion:
JERRY LAWLER

(C) 234, Memphis, TN

- 1—JEFF JARRETT**
(1) 220, Hendersonville, TN
- 2—SCOTTY FLAMINGO**
(-) 235, Short Hills, NJ
- 3—DAN DAVIS**
(2) 218, Nashville, TN
- 4—BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
(4) 230, Memphis, TN
- 5—JEFF GAYLORD**
(-) 280, St. Louis, MO
- 6—MASTER OF TERROR I**
(5) 235, parts unknown
- 7—KOKO B. WARE**
(-) 229, Union City, TN
- 8—WOLFIE D**
(-) 250, parts unknown
- 9—RANDY ROCKET**
(-) 230, Memphis, TN
- 10—ROCK 'N' ROLL PHANTOM**
(9) 245, parts unknown

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue, while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

MOST HATED

1 HULK HOGAN
300, Venice, CA
Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular

2 STING
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular

3 THE UNDERTAKER
320, Dallas, TX
Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular

4 BRET HART
235, Calgary, Alberta
Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular

5 CURT HENNING
235, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular

6 DUSTIN RHODES
254, Austin, TX
Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular

7 DAVEY BOY SMITH
245, Leeds, England
Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular

8 COLD SCORPIO
222, Denver, CO
Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular

9 CACTUS JACK
303, Truth or Consequences, NM
Last issue: unrated

10 JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
Last issue: unrated

1 BIG VAN VADER
404, Denver, CO
Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated

2 YOKOZUNA
505, Samoa
Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated

3 RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated

4 PAUL ORNDORFF
253, Brandon, FL
Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated

5 BARRY WINDHAM
263, Sweetwater, TX
Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated

6 TONY ANTHONY
235, Bucksport, TN
Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated

7 BRIAN CHRISTOPHER
220, Memphis, TN
Last issue: No. 7 Most Hated

8 KEVIN SULLIVAN
252, Boston, MA
Last issue: No. 9 Most Hated

9 GIANT GONZALES
435, Argentina
Last issue: unrated

10 BLACK BART
261, Pampa, TX
Last issue: unrated

For period ended April 19, 1993

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

- 1—BRET HART73 points
- 2—RICK RUDE48 points
- 2—BIG VAN VADER48 points
- 4—RON SIMMONS39 points
- 5—STING/SHAWN MICHAELS37 points

TAG TEAMS

- 1—MONEY INC.73 points
- 2—RICK & SCOTT STEINER52 points
- 3—STEAMBOAT & DOUGLAS46 points
- 4—NATURAL DISASTERS43 points
- 5—GORDY & WILLIAMS37 points

SMOKY MOUNTAIN

Smoky Mountain Champion:
TRACEY SMOTHERS
(2) 227, Atlanta, GA

- 1—TIM HORNER
(3) 235, Morristown, TN
- 2—BOBBY EATON
(1) 245, Huntsville, AL
- 3—TONY ANTHONY
(C) 235, Bucksport, TN
- 4—BRIAN LEE
(4) 251, Los Angeles, CA
- 5—KEVIN SULLIVAN
(-) 252, Boston, MA
- 6—NIGHTSTALKER
(5) 306, parts unknown
- 7—KILLER KYLE
(6) 303, Atlanta, GA
- 8—ARN ANDERSON
(7) 249, Minneapolis, MN
- 9—BOBBY BLADE
(-) 230, Knoxville, TN
- 10—ROBBIE EAGLE
(-) 225, Knoxville, TN

IWCCW

IWCCW Champion:
TITLE VACANT

To be determined in tourney

- 1—JOE SAVOLDI
(1) 220, Parsippany, NJ
- 2—JIMMY DEO
(2) 301, Blandon, PA
- 3—TASMANIAC
(3) 245, Tasmania
- 4—L.A. GORE
(4) 288, Los Angeles, CA
- 5—TOMMY DREAMER
(5) 245, Yonkers, NY
- 6—NIKOLAI VOLKOFF
(6) 280, Moscow, Russia
- 7—THE NINJA
(7) 277, Japan
- 8—EL DIABLO
(8) 246, Toluca, Mexico
- 9—JOHNNY WILDSIDE
(9) 285, parts unknown
- 10—COUSIN LUKE
(10) 336, Mud Lick, KY

ECW: ECW champion—The Sandman; 1—Jimmy Snuka; 2—Eddie Gilbert; 3—Tommy Cairo; 4—Don Muraco; 5—Sal Bellomo; 6—Johnny Hot Body; 7—Terry Funk; 8—Glenn Osbourne; 9—Ivan Koloff; 10—J.T. Smith.

ICWA: ICWA champion—Frankie Rose; 1—Mr. Mickey Jay; 2—Cuban Assassin; 3—Mr. Nice; 4—Brett Sawyer; 5—Jim Backlund; 6—The Surgeon General; 7—Mr. Electricity; 8—Mark Starr; 9—Mad Bill Pain; 10—The Stormtrooper.

IWF: IWF champion—title vacant; 1—Hercules Hernandez; 2—The Possessor; 3—Chubby M.C.; 4—Greg Valentine; 5—Cliff Anderson; 6—Rob Van Dam; 7—Chris Proctor; 8—Kendall Windham; 9—Nuclear Assassin; 10—Billy Brooks.

PWA: PWA champion—The Hater; 1—Charlie Norris; 2—Brad Rheingans; 3—Lightning Kid; 4—The Punisher; 5—Randy Gusto; 6—Tommy Ferrara; 7—Steve Berg; 8—Derrick Dukes; 9—Larry Cameron; 10—Billy Blaze.

PWF: PWF champion—Italian Stallion; 1—George South; 2—Flaming Youth; 3—Cruel Connection II; 4—Terry Austin; 5—Scotty McKeever; 6—Russian Assassin II; 7—Star Ryder; 8—Killozer; 9—Russian Assassin I; 10—Mad Dog.

USA: USA TV champion—Col. DeBeers; 1—Jimmy Snuka; 2—Bart Sawyer; 3—Jesse Barr; 4—Hercules; 5—Max Steele; 6—The Polynesian Prince; 7—John Rambo; 8—Al Madril; 9—Buddy Wayne; 10—C.W. Bergstrom.

WIN: WIN champion—A.C. Golden; 1—A.J. Fritzoid; 2—Chris Candido; 3—Agent Orange; 4—Pain; 5—The Spider; 6—Nick Tarentino; 7—Adrian Hall; 8—Morgus the Maniac; 9—Lightning Kid; 10—Ricky Blues.

WWC: WWC Universal champion—Carlos Colon; 1—Invader I; 2—Mr. Hughes; 3—The Mountie; 4—La Ley; 5—El Bronco; 6—Jose Luis Rivera; 7—The Rattler; 8—Mohammad Hussein; 9—Killer Karl Wallace; 10—Ricky Santana.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 20 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Fire On The Mountain. Since its inception one year ago, Smoky Mountain Wrestling has been perhaps the most interesting and exciting of all independent federations. With that in mind, we are giving the Mid-Atlantic promotion preferred status within our ratings pages.

Beginning this issue, Smoky Mountain replaces the Global Wrestling Federation on our "Independent Ratings" page, running directly beneath the USWA. The GWF will assume SMW's space within the agate ratings.

Some of our magazines had already been listing SMW's top 10 in the large, bold-faced type always accorded the WWF and WCW. Others reserved a space for Smoky Mountain in the agate ratings. This move can be interpreted in a number of ways, but what we are really trying to say is this: Smoky Mountain is a big-time promotion worthy of big-time coverage.



Tracey Smothers

With the overall power and visibility of both the WWF and WCW, independent promotions such as Smoky Mountain and the USWA are to be commended for not only surviving, but thriving in what can be considered a two-league sport.

Smoky Mountain has succeeded because it has followed the blueprint for independent success drawn up by the USWA. Like the USWA, SMW puts an emphasis on accommodating its local fans. Like the USWA, SMW has a regional television contract. And, like the USWA, SMW has a talent-exchange program with one of the larger federations.

There really is not much difference between Smoky Mountain and Global, other than the fact that, right now, SMW is the more popular federation. Its edge in popularity might be attributed to its talent roster. While most of Global's grapplers are young and hail from Texas, Smoky Mountain has an excellent blend of youth and experience, with plenty of wrestlers who have carved their niche in other promotions.

The SMW heavyweight champion is Tracey Smothers, who finally wrestled the title from Tony Anthony on April

2. The "Dirty White Boy" had held the title since last August, at the time the longest reign of any champion in any American federation. Before SMW's start-up last spring, Anthony competed in the USWA, while fans are familiar with Smothers from his days in WCW.

The TV champion is Bobby Eaton, who recently defeated Tim Horner to capture the title. Eaton, who held both singles and tag team titles in WCW, is engaged in a heated feud with Arn Anderson, his former WCW tag team partner.

Unlike the two major federations, which often ignore wrestlers' pasts as if they never happened, Smoky Mountain keeps its fans informed so that they may better understand the hatred between antagonists. When Anderson clubbed Eaton to ignite this feud, he claimed it was because "Beautiful Bobby" never called him while Anderson was recovering from a knee injury suffered in WCW. Imagine that happening in the WWF!



Bob Armstrong

Smoky Mountain's hottest feud is within its tag team ranks, where current champions The Heavenly Bodies are fending off challenges from The Rock 'n' Roll Express and The Stud Stable. Bodies' manager Jim Corrette, still wielding his tennis racket, is consistently drawing the ire of SMW Commissioner Bob Armstrong. Last November, the

Bodies and the Express traded the tag team belts back and forth on four consecutive nights!

There are plenty of other talented wrestlers in SMW, including Brian Lee, The Tasmaniac, and the maniacal Kevin Sullivan, whose bloody attacks on fan favorites have him on the verge of banishment. And where do you think Paul Orndorff was plying his trade before he joined WCW and became TV champion?

Although Smoky Mountain is less than one year old, it is certainly not blowing hot air.

Later, 'gator. Do you think Smoky Mountain should be accorded major-league status? And what of the GWF? Let us know. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o Pro Wrestling Illustrated, Box 956, Ft. Washington, PA 19034. □

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TimeCAPSULES



NOW JUST RELAX WHILE I REARRANGE YOUR SPINE

In 1985, Jimmy Hart was running wild in Memphis, and his biggest charge was 450-pound King Kong Bundy. Prior to big matches against Jerry Lawler, the "Mouth of the South" would try to ease his man's tension with a soothing massage. Said Hart at the time: "This helps Bundy think about how he's gonna smash Lawler and take that Mid-Southern title!" After the confrontations, some insiders suggested that perhaps Hart might enjoy a better career as a chiropractor than a manager. He was not amused.



MIGHTY UNKIND OF YOU

The Mighty Atlas had a name for his version of the full nelson. He simply called it the "Atlas Nelson." One day on a lark, Atlas decided to see if he could lock two midget wrestlers in the crunching hold. The Mighty Fritz and Sky Low Low agreed to be the subjects of this experiment. After Atlas proved he could do it, the midgets complained to him that he had made them look like fools. Atlas' response: "They agreed to this. I did not force them into it. They're just annoyed because they could not break my grip!"

ADVICE FOR A GOOD FRIEND

"Wildfire" Tommy Rich always came out of a match against Buzz Sawyer worse than when he went in. Often, that meant he emerged a bloody mess. Mr. Wrestling II, a close friend of Rich's, offered him counsel many times during his feud with Sawyer. "The most important thing I ever told him," the now retired II recalls, "was to keep his head about him no matter how hairy the situation got. When you let a madman like Sawyer get your goat, you're in trouble." Ten years later, Rich still values II's words.



KNOW YOUR HOLDS

Sandor Szabo (right) demonstrates on his sparring partner how he begins one of his many variations of the suplex. At the time, in 1934, Szabo was in training (he preferred sparring outdoors) for a World title match against Jim Londos in New York. Szabo did not capture the gold that year, but it was not his last chance. In 1941, Szabo won the World championship by defeating wrestling and football legend Bronko Nagurski in St. Louis.

Every other month, *The Wrestling Observer* magazine will publish a special "Wrestling Observer" issue. This special issue will be published in the month of January. The issue will be published in the month of January.



FUN IN THE SUN

It was a beautiful sunny day in southern Florida in October 1960 when Eddie Graham took his son, Mike, for a swim and a scuba diving lesson. Despite his young age, Mike quickly picked up the basics of scuba. At the same time, his dad also was teaching him the basics of professional wrestling. Mike soon began to do as well on the mat as he did on the water. In 1972, Mike made his pro debut and quickly began earning a reputation for ring excellence as great as the one his father established in the late 1950s and early 1960s.



DIAMOND IS A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND

Paul Diamond liked to run along the beaches near Houston, Texas, to strengthen his stamina. On this particularly invigorating jaunt, he was joined by a female admirer and decided to favor her with a feat of strength. Many of Diamond's fans enjoyed calling him "The World's Sexiest Wrestler." He took a lot of heat for that from his fellow wrestlers, but refused to let it faze him. "I don't apologize for anything!" Diamond asserted. "It's jealousy, pure and simple. Tell them all I'll meet them in the ring."



TWO SHADES OF WHITE

Can one think of two more opposite personalities than Ric Flair and Bob Backlund? Flair is the brash, arrogant, flamboyant "Nature Boy." Backlund is the kind, polite "All-American Boy." In 1982, on the Gordon Solie-hosted *Georgia Championship Wrestling*, NWA World champion Flair challenged WWF World titlist Backlund to a title vs. title match. They did eventually meet, and both men emerged with their titles intact. Today a similar confrontation between the WWF and WCW is almost unimaginable.

A CRUNCHING CONFRONTATION

On June 1, 1937, Bobby Bruns challenged World champion Everett Marshall at the Public Hall in Cleveland, Ohio. After a battle that lasted 44 minutes, 48 seconds, Marshall was still the champion, and Bruns was left lying on the mat unconscious with a broken vertebrae. Police and doctors attended to the Chicago native for more than 10 minutes before he came to. Six months later, Marshall lost the title to Lou Thesz.



PERFECT commentator



When Missy Hyatt attempted to speak with Ric Flair upon his arrival at SuperBrawl III, WCW security quickly ushered her away. Hyatt has been pursuing Flair ever since, with considerably more success. She says she believes she'd make a great manager for the "Nature Boy."

BEAUTIFUL BLONDE. WRESTLER. Manager. Columnist. TV commentator. Model. Dizzy blonde. All of those descriptions fit Missy Hyatt, who has made WCW a considerably more attractive and amusing place since her arrival in the federation several years ago.

In 1991, she engaged in a feud with Paul E. Dangerously, humiliating her WCW co-commentator. Her war with Madusa turned into a beauty contest, and when that happened Missy won in a landslide. The fans said so!

Her monthly column in *WCW Magazine* is one of the strangest things you'll ever read. It's sort of like Larry King meets Kelly Bundy. In one recent column, Missy wrote about hair care, the rising price of stamps, and came up with this Berraesque brainstorm: "It's only a man's world for the men, right? For you and me, it's a woman's world!" Indeed!

Besides penning columns, Missy also makes headlines. It appears that she is angling to manage Ric Flair. During one recent incident, Larry Zbyszko interviewed Missy outside of Flair's dressing room. When Flair's bodyguards intervened, The Barbarian ran out to protect Missy, who had been managing him. Missy showed her gratitude by dumping Barbarian.

Hyatt spoke with Senior Editor Bill Apter, Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum, and Editor-in-Chief Craig Peters prior to a WCW TV taping at Atlanta's Center Stage Theater. She entered the room wearing a low-cut white tank top and a pair of black pumps, getting the interview off to a rousing start!

MISSY HYATT

MISSY HYATT: Welcome, boys. Now what can I tell y'all?

DAVE ROSENBAUM: Oops, I think I just dropped my pen. Missy, could you get that for me?

HYATT: Why, certainly. Anything I can do for a fellow journalist.

CRAIG PETERS: That was immature, Dave.

ROSENBAUM: What? All I did was drop my pen by mistake.

PETERS: Yeah, right, by mistake. And your eyes almost popped out of your head by mistake when Missy bent over to pick it up.

HYATT: Now, stop arguing, boys, and let's just sit around here and talk. I think we're going to have a nice afternoon. Shall we order lunch?

BILL APTER: I'm on a diet.

HYATT: Well, why is that, Bill? You look just yummy!

ROSENBAUM: Listen to her talk. This is the woman who thought Jason Hervey was a hot mass of flesh.

HYATT: Now let's not talk about Jason. This interview is about me, isn't it? Let's talk about me!

PETERS: Yeah, let's talk about Missy. And while we're at it, Missy, let's talk about Ric Flair.

HYATT: I'd love to talk about Ric Flair, but he doesn't seem to have much time for little ol' me these days.

APTER: I wonder why.

ROSENBAUM: Maybe it's because he's seen what happens to every other man who associates with Missy. Listen, no offense, Missy. You're beautiful and all, but you're not exactly the most patient and loyal woman in the world.

HYATT: That's not a very nice thing to say, Dave. I'm loyal to all my men when they're around, and I'm loyal to other men when they're gone.

ROSENBAUM: Exactly.

HYATT: But I stand by my men all the time.

PETERS: Like you did with Barbarian. I mean, the guy lost one match to Paul Orndorff and you just walked away from ring-side. How could you do that? Didn't you have a contract?

HYATT: There was no contract and I left because I realized how much work Barbarian needs before he's ready to become a champion and before he's ready for me. You know, not just anyone can be with me. I just decided we're better off without each other.

ROSENBAUM: It sounds like you just didn't like losing.

HYATT: Well, of course not. Who likes losing? It's a lot worse than winning.

APTER: Well said, Missy.

ROSENBAUM: Oops! There goes that pen again.

PETERS: Pick it up yourself, Dave.

ROSENBAUM: I was just trying to do you guys a favor.

Every Issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

AM

Men think they run the show, but women like me have every right to our place in this world."



(Continued on page 68)

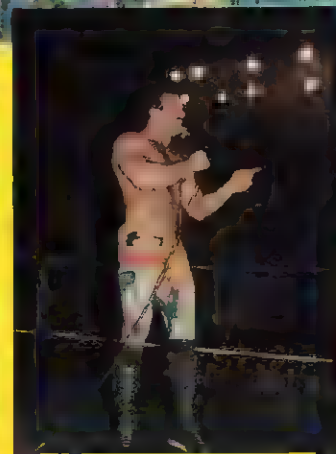
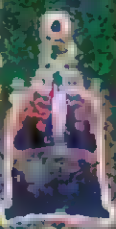


W



Photos by Bill Anier and Al Bello

WWE a new era in wrestling



WCW

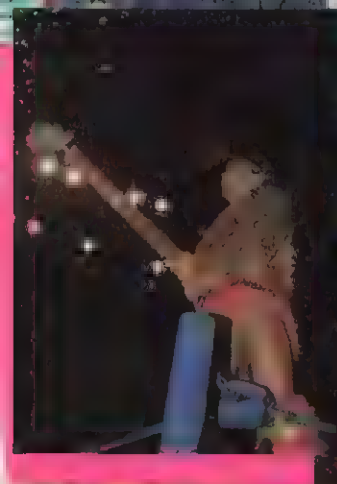
For the first
time ever, WCW
ran a card in
Manhattan.

By Dave Rosenbaum

Takes

The site was The
Paramount,
Madison Square
Garden's 5,000-
seat auxiliary
arena, and the
event was of
history-making
proportions in
an area that
once belonged
to the WWF

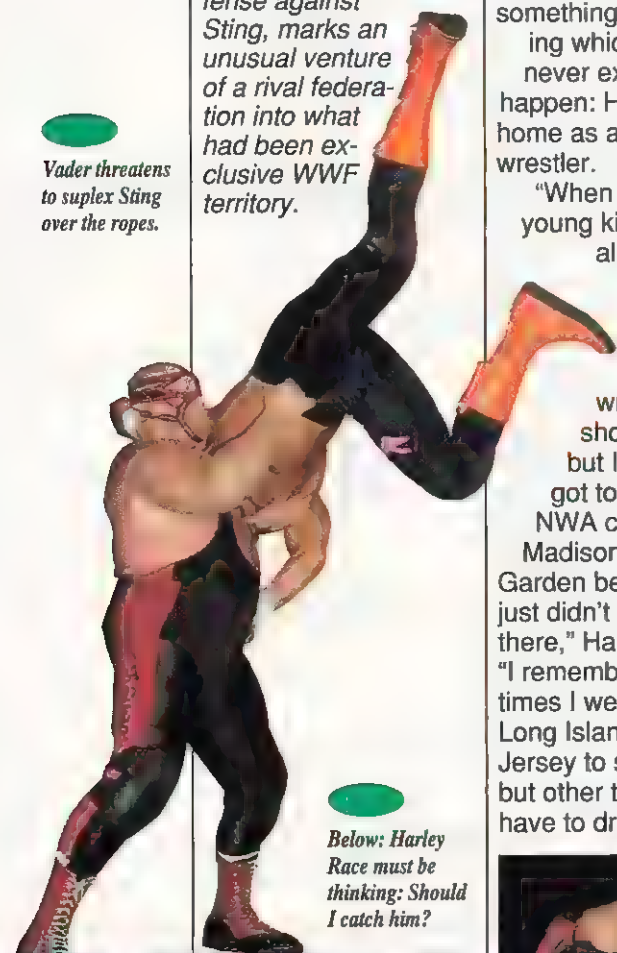
MANHATTAN



N

EW YORK—World Championship Wrestling, the federation owned by Atlanta cable magnate Ted Turner, will run its first card in Manhattan on April 14 at The Paramount. The card, which features World champion Big Van Vader in a title defense against Sting, marks an unusual venture of a rival federation into what had been exclusive WWF territory.

Vader threatens to suplex Sting over the ropes.



Below: Harley Race must be thinking: Should I catch him?



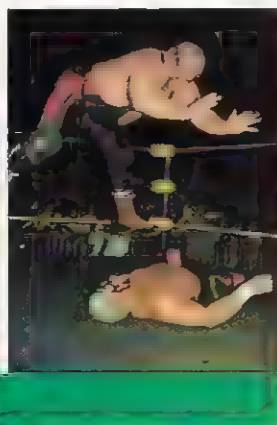
Top right: Vader drops nearly a quarter-ton of flesh on Sting. Far right: "Handsome Harley" is always a factor.

few minutes he'll be airborne on a flight to New York. Home.

Van Hammer grew up in New York and learned how to be tough in New York. The streets are in his blood, and Manhattan is in his voice. He has family and friends living there, and now something is happening which Hammer never expected to happen: He is going home as a WCW wrestler.

"When I was a young kid, I'd watch all the

wrestling shows on TV but I never once got to see an NWA card at Madison Square Garden because they just didn't wrestle there," Hammer said. "I remember a few times I went out to Long Island or New Jersey to see WCW, but other than that I'd have to drive down to



Baltimore or Philadelphia.

"Believe me, when I signed with WCW, it wasn't because I thought I'd have the opportunity to wrestle in front of my people. This is just too much!"

The flight takes off. It takes about two hours from Hartsfield to New York's LaGuardia Airport, but to Hammer it seems like 10. He constantly checks his watch and asks an amused stewardess when the plane is scheduled to land.

"I told you before, Mr. Hammer," said a particularly cute blonde. "We'll be on the ground at 3:30."

When the plane lands, Hammer is the first person in the aisle. He is the first person off the plane. He walks off the jetway and into the waiting arms of family members and friends who have come to greet him.

Van Hammer is home. The next night at The Paramount in Manhattan, he will wrestle arch-rival Vinnie Vegas. And everybody will be there to see him.

How did this happen? For more than four decades, Manhattan belonged to the WWF. Sure, the NWA ran cards at Nassau Coliseum on nearby Long Island, Byrne Meadowlands Arena in nearby East

Rutherford, New Jersey, and at old Sunnyside Gardens in Queens—one of New York's five

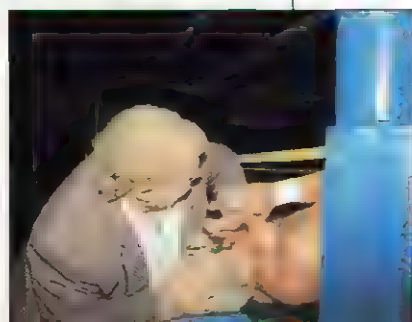
boroughs—but Madison Square Garden was always the WWF's exclusive property.

How did it happen that WCW was allowed—yes, that's the correct word—to run a card at The Paramount, the 5,000-seat auxiliary arena which is part of the Garden complex? A lot of it had to do with wrestling's changing economics and the WWF's decision to run fewer shows at 20,000-seat Madison Square Garden and weekly cards at the 1,200-seat Manhattan Center.

"It's certainly free enterprise," said New York State Athletic Commission chairman Randy Gordon. "For years it's been closed, but why shouldn't any organization promote in there? It was a matter of economics. Once the WWF's exclusive contract with the Garden ended, there was a backing away from its Garden ties. Then WCW sat down, and was able to negotiate."

According to Gordon, there's no reason WCW wouldn't be allowed to hold a card in the main arena. For now, that's a matter of economics, too. WCW chose The Paramount for the debut show because it's cheaper to rent and easier to fill. "This was a feeling-out process," Gordon said. "They wanted to see if it would go over well. The Garden is a very expensive room to open up."

Over the past few years, even the WWF





hasn't been able to regularly fill the main building, except for major cards and pay-per-view events. As TV continues asserting its influence as wrestling's main arena, people are moving away from the live cards and settling down on their couches.

Now the WWF sees New York as a sort of TV studio; the Manhattan Center, not the Garden or The Paramount, was the perfect place for WWF Monday Night Raw. Years ago, the WWF easily packed the Garden for its monthly cards. These days, the cards are scheduled less frequently.

"If you're a promoter and you were formerly using a big room and getting 20,000, and now you're getting half a house, it's time to look to another venue," said Gordon.

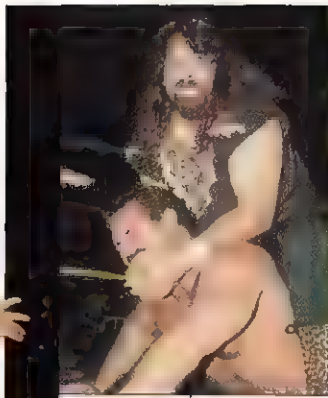
"I'm sure the WWF was breaking even, but they weren't making money."

Calls went out to other federations. News leaked that the WWF's territorial lock on the Garden had ended.

WCW took Manhattan. Van Hammer grabbed a flight.

New York — World Championship Wrestling made its debut at The Paramount tonight before an enthusiastic crowd of about 3,500 fans. New York City-born Van Hammer pinned Vinnie Vegas on the undercard, and Big Van Vader lost to Sting but kept his WCW World title in the main event.

There was a feeling in the locker rooms at The Paramount. It was the kind of feeling that's apparent only before the really big shows, like Starrcade



or SuperBrawl, or before the really big matches, like Flair-Steamboat or Hogan-Savage.

Van Hammer kept peeking out the door, waiting for a signal that his match was about to begin. Sting paced back and forth. He turned on the TV, turned it off again, turned it back on, then

decided on the radio. He turned that off and started confessing to a reporter.

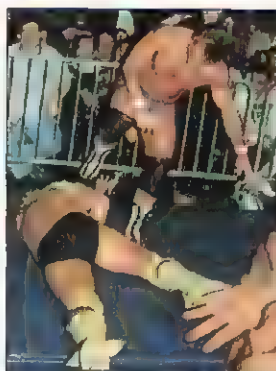
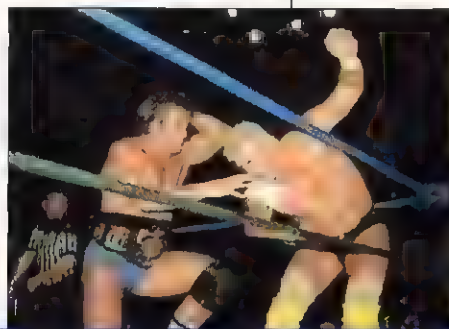
"I'm nervous," Sting said. "I can't remember the last time I felt this way before a match. It's not because I'm wrestling

Vader, it's because we're here. This is an exciting moment for all of us. If this goes over big, then it means WCW expands to

where it wasn't before." Even the rulebreakers in the locker room

Cactus Jack and Rick Rude emptied their entire offensive arsenals before "Ravishing" Rick finished the slugfest with a "Rude Awakening."

Below: Still wearing his TV belt (which was not on the line), Paul Orndorff attacks U.S. champion Dustin Rhodes before the bell. Bottom right: "Mr. Wonderful" exerts pressure against "The Natural's" injured shoulder.

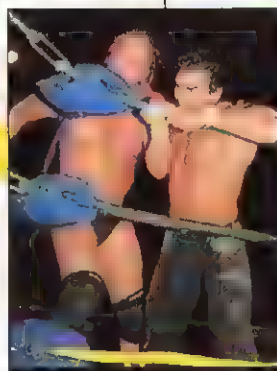


Above: Orndorff takes his dominance beyond the ring confines, but is eventually disqualified for using a foreign object.





Drawing encouragement from his hometown fans, Van Hammer applies a hammerlock on Vinnie Vegas, eventually scoring the victory with a rollup pin.



Left: Rick Steamboat introduces NWA champion Barry Windham to the turnbuckles. Above: Windham scores the pinfall, using the ropes to add leverage to his rollup.

down the hall seemed unusually pumped up about the card. TV champion Paul Orndorff, who wrestled here numerous times as a WWF star, kept asking, "What's the house? What's the house?" He wanted to know the size of the crowd.

Rick Rude returned from a trip to the runway leading to the ring, and brought news of an important sighting.

"You guys gotta see this brunette in the front row!" Rude said. "She's incredible."

Hours later, everyone in The Paramount will see the brunette in the front row. In an act that certainly fit the occasion, the woman removed her top, revealing a rather shapely upper torso. Police and building security gladly escorted her from the building for further interrogation.

"I've never seen that happen in Atlanta," Rude said. "Too bad."

There's something else Rude has never seen happen in

Atlanta, and it happened in his match against Cactus Jack. Before the match, Rude stepped into the ring with his robe on and went into his usual act.

"What I'd like to have now is for all you fat, out-of-shape, inner-city scumbuckets to sit back and see what a real man looks like," Rude said as he prepared to remove the robe and reveal his muscular physique.

While Rude preened, Cactus Jack entered the ring, grabbed the microphone, and stole the show.

"Stop the music!" Jack screamed. "What I'd like to have right now is for Rick Rude to stand back and be quiet and take a look at what a fat, out-of-shape, inner-city scumbucket is supposed to look like."

Jack's act brought down the house, but Rude later brought down Jack with his "Rude Awakening" for the pin.

There were other disappointments on

the card. Sting had Vader tied up in a "scorpion deathlock" when manager Harley Race interfered on the champion's behalf. Vader was disqualified, and Sting was denied a chance to win the belt.

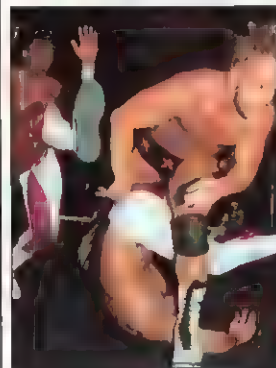
"Typical Race tactics," Sting said. "But I know by now what to expect from Race. There's just not much I can do about it."

The rulebreakers had a good night. NWA champion Barry Windham pinned Rick

champion Dustin Rhodes defeated TV champion Paul Orndorff by disqualification. They seemed happier when Orndorff blasted Rhodes with a foreign object.

"This is a sophisticated crowd," Orndorff said. "They know class when they see it."

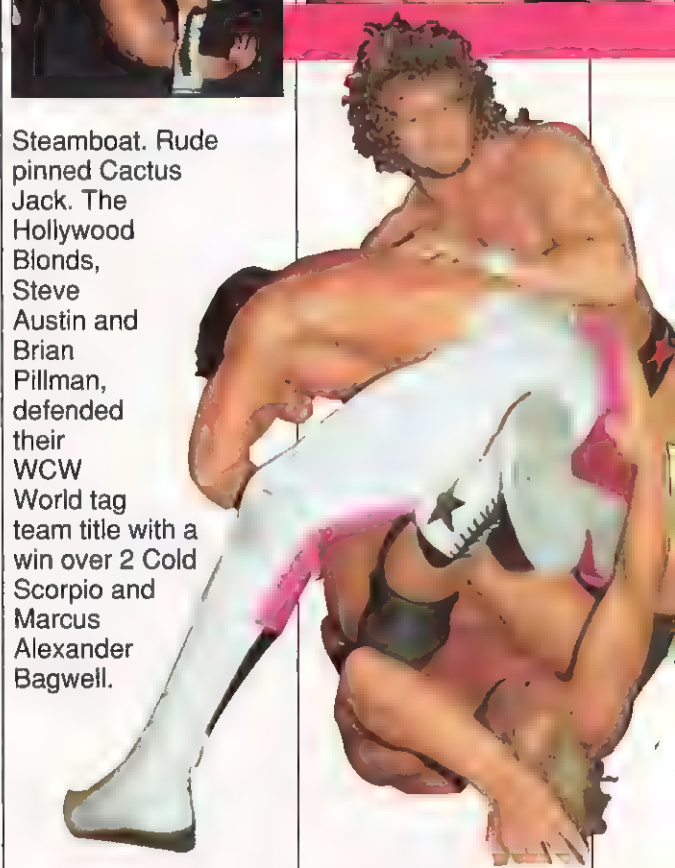
The crowd's sophistication might be questioned, but its enthusiasm was never in doubt. The little Paramount sounded like the big Garden, sold out for a champi-



Steamboat. Rude pinned Cactus Jack. The Hollywood Blonds, Steve Austin and Brian Pillman, defended their WCW World tag team title with a win over 2 Cold Scorpio and Marcus Alexander Bagwell.



Far right (clockwise): Brian Pillman flies in to make the save for partner Steve Austin against Marcus Alexander Bagwell... Out of view of the referee, Pillman chokes Bagwell's partner, 2 Cold Scorpio, with a towel... Scorpio makes a vain attempt to prevent Austin's pin of Bagwell.



Surprisingly, the crowd didn't seem too happy when U.S.

onship match. WCW's New York fans, starved for some live action, took it all in and

Tex Slazenger has Johnny B. Badd in a position where he can't use his fists. Soon, however, Badd was back on his feet, firing combinations, and scoring the pin.



were hungry for more at the end.

Maybe what they really wanted was an appearance by Ric Flair. The "Nature Boy" was scheduled for a live edition of his "Flair for the Gold" interview segment, but couldn't make it to New York because his plane out of Charlotte, North Carolina, had mechanical problems.

"I was disappointed," Flair said. "But there was nothing I could do about it. Heck, even I can't fly."

Maybe Flair couldn't fly, but Van Hammer could. The home cooking and all of the partying he did the night before had no affect on Hammer's performance. He pinned Vinnie Vegas, putting the perfect finishing touch on his homecoming.

"I would have been more upset than ever if I lost," said Hammer, who is scheduled to challenge Windham for the NWA title. "Now I can't wait to come back here and win my first title in New York."

Van Hammer was surrounded by people as he walked out of The Paramount. He had one more night in New York, and then a flight to Baltimore the next day.

"It was fun," Hammer said. "I always tell these guys that New York is the greatest city in the

world. Now maybe they'll believe me."

New York World Championship Wrestling's first card here was deemed a partial success by federation officials. Although there were several hundred empty seats in the 5,000-seat Paramount, officials decided it was a good "first step."

WCW hoped to pack The Paramount, but didn't. In retrospect, its best decision was to not run the card in the main arena.

"What that

would have been is a mistake," said a high-ranking WCW official, who requested anonymity. "Our best move was to be level-headed about the whole thing and take it one card at a time. If we can fill the place next time, then maybe we'll think about going into the Garden."

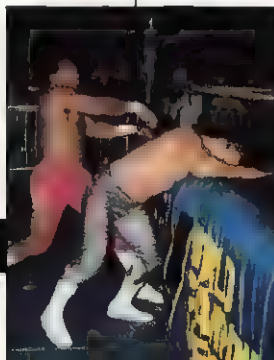
WCW isn't as desperate as it once was to run cards in New York. With the spread of cable TV and pay-per-view, every federation is the "home" federation. But WCW would like to further expand its fan base, and there's something to be gained by giving the fans live contact with the wrestlers.

There's nothing like live wrestling. For the first time, New York wrestling fans discovered that there's nothing like live WCW wrestling! □

New Yorker Maxx Payne is not a very gracious host, forcing Britain's Steve Regal to submit to a "Pain Killer."



Ron Simmons and Chris Benoit were both disqualified for excessive brawling.



WrestleMania IX

WrestleMania was held on April 4 at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada. The card was viewed live by over 16,000 fans in Caesars Palace's makeshift outdoor stadium—dubbed "The Roman Coliseum" by WWF publicists—and by millions more on pay-per-view TV. There were also two PPV replays during the following weeks.

● Jim Ross, the former WCW blow-by-blow man, made his WWF debut by providing the match description. The color analysts were Randy "Macho Man" Savage and manager Bobby Heenan. Gorilla Monsoon and Gene Okerlund provided prematch commentary and interviews. A videotape of the entire card was due for release in late spring.

● WrestleMania is annually the most important event on the WWF calendar, and this year's edition was no exception. On the following pages, you'll relive the excitement and controversy of WrestleMania IX. You'll thrill to Hulk Hogan's stunningly controversial victory for the WWF World title, and to The Undertaker's miraculous recovery.

● And then we'll take you deeper. Our one-of-a-kind in-depth analysis shows who were the real winners and losers at WrestleMania IX. It presents a long-term view of this most unusual day of wrestling.

The Real Winner



rs and Losers

It is often the case that the biggest beneficiary of a victory is not the man whose hand is raised by the referee at the conclusion of the match.

*Likewise, the biggest loser isn't always the man whose shoulder was pinned to the canvas. Join **Pro Wrestling Illustrated** as we capture the true essence of **WrestleMania IX**, in pictures and words!*



THE MATCH: Shawn Michaels vs. Tatanka for Michaels' Intercontinental title.

THE ACTION: The most intriguing story in this highly anticipated match was the subplot, which featured Sensational Sherri in Tatanka's corner and Luna Vachon in Michaels' corner.

But first there was the matter of the match. There were outstanding displays of defensive wrestling in the opening six minutes, as the wrestlers neutralized each other with expert counter-moves.

Tatanka smartly worked on Michaels' injured left shoulder with chops, punches, kicks, and by ramming the champion into the turnbuckle. Sherri and Luna had two confrontations outside the ring, but nothing developed either time.

The match ended shortly after Tatanka twice came a beat short of pinning Michaels. Both men were out of the ring and on the apron when Michaels attempted a high-risk elbowsmash. Tatanka moved out of the way and Michaels smashed his left arm on the apron.

Tatanka dragged himself into the ring while the referee began counting out Michaels. Suddenly, Michaels grabbed the referee by the leg and pulled him onto the stadium floor. Michaels crawled back into the ring, where he was shaken by a fallaway slam. Tatanka rolled up Michaels for the pin attempt just as the referee recovered and called for the bell.

THE WINNER: Tatanka, by disqualification at 18:18.

THE REAL WINNER: Michaels. Tatanka clearly had

him in a helpless pin position. The "Boy Toy" would have lost the title if not for his manhandling of the referee, resulting in the disqualification.

THE REAL LOSER: Sensational Sherri. Immediately after the match, Luna clotheslined Sherri, dropped her to the floor with a series of kicks, and bodyslammed her. Luna ran back to the dressing room area as Tatanka came to Sherri's aid. Later, Sherri was attacked while being treated in the first-aid station.

THE MATCH: The Headshrinkers vs. Rick and Scott Steiner.

THE ACTION: The match quickly degenerated into a four-way brawl. The Steiners ignited the crowd with a pair of "Steinerlines" that sent Samu and Fatu flying from the ring.

But The Headshrinkers are a dangerous team and the Steiners' advantage didn't last long. Scott tagged in after three minutes and spent the next nine minutes enduring a two-sided attack by Samu and Fatu. Fatu connected on an awesome headbutt from the top rope and covered Scott for what would have been a three count if Rick hadn't interfered.

The turning point came with 12:35 gone. Samu climbed to the top rope for an elbowsmash and Scott rolled out at the last instant. Both men tagged out and fresh partners entered the ring.

This gave Scott a chance

to refresh himself while Rick continued to endure a beating. Samu connected with a kick to the face. Fatu dumped Rick out of the ring. As he flew threw the ring ropes, Rick tagged Scott in mid-air.

Fatu clotheslined Scott. Then Scott reversed a whip and delivered a belly-to-belly suplex. Samu tagged in, dumped Scott, and whipped him into the ropes. Scott rebounded with a "Frankensteiner" and covered Samu.

THE WINNERS: The Steiners at 14:22 when Scott pinned Samu.

THE REAL WINNERS: The Steiners. No brainstorm here. The number-one contenders to the WWF World tag team title are now in line for the shot they've been waiting for.

Above: Scott Steiner stuns Samu of The Headshrinkers with the tilt-a-whirl suplex.

Top right and right: Tatanka has Intercontinental champion Shawn Michaels at a clear disadvantage!



Opposite right: After the Michaels-Tatanka bout, Luna Vachon and Sensational Sherri had a bout of their own!

Bottom right: Tatanka helps Sherri back to the locker room area.

WrestleMania • IX

THE REAL LOSERS:

Money Inc. The WWF World tag team champions got a break when they wrestled the makeshift team of Hulk Hogan and Brutus Beefcake at WrestleMania. Now they'll have to hold off a real team with real experience. Ted DiBiase and Irwin R. Schyster are good, but the Steiners are better.

THE MATCH: Crush vs.

Doink the Clown.

THE ACTION: Flip

through your memory bank.

Pull out the folder that says, "Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan: Impostor Referee Scandal." You'll want to compare notes.

Call this "The Impostor Clown Scandal." Doink called it an illusion, and Heenan played along, but there's no doubt there were two identical clowns in the ring while the referee was knocked out.

Only in the WWF. Only at WrestleMania.

With 6:04 gone, the action spilled out of the ring for the third time. Doink tried to crawl under the canvas, but Crush stopped him. Crush briefly regained control and applied pressure on Doink's skull. Doink desperately tried to escape the hold and—accidentally or not—hit referee Joey Marella.

Doink went under the ring. Crush grabbed him and reapplied pressure to Doink's skull. Then another clown, made up exactly like Doink, ran out from under the ring and beat Crush with a prosthesis. The clowns double-

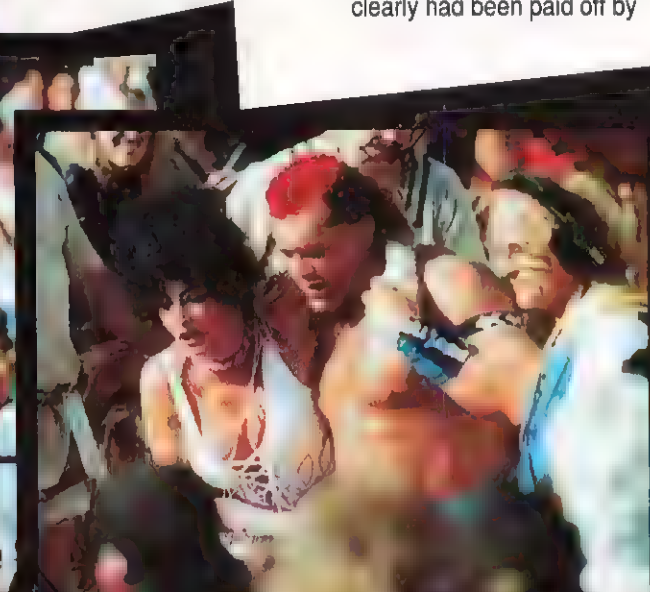
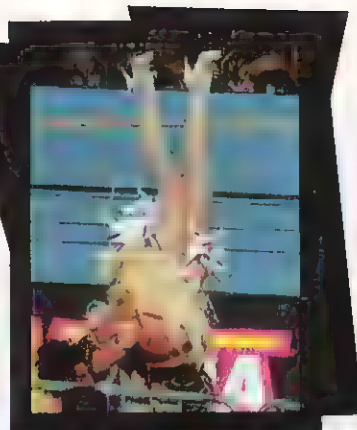
teamed Crush and entertained the crowd with a mime act before the impostor Doink ran back under the ring.

Just as Marella recovered, the real Doink covered Crush.

THE WINNER: Doink, by pinfall at 8:21.

THE REAL LOSER: Jack Tunney.

Yes, Tunney. The WWF president set a horribly dangerous precedent in 1988 with his ruling on the impostor referee scandal. Tunney allowed Andre the Giant's questionable pin on Hulk Hogan, even though referee Dave Hebner's identical twin brother, Earl, clearly had been paid off by





Left and below: Crush was just about to put the squeeze on Doink when...

Bottom left: Doink II interfered... Bottom right: allowing Doink to score the pin.

Ted DiBiase and wasn't even supposed to be in the ring.

Tunney also ruled Andre had no right to give the belt to DiBiase, but that was of no matter to Doink when he devised this scheme. Doink knew precedent was on his side: Tunney proved he wouldn't overturn a match in which an impostor was involved. If Tunney wouldn't overturn a World title match aired on national prime time television, he certainly wouldn't overturn a WrestleMania IX undercard match.

Tunney is a weak president with no bite. This time, his actions bit him back.

THE MATCH: Razor Ramon vs. Bob Backlund.

THE ACTION: From the start, it was Backlund's science vs. Ramon's power. Backlund scored two early takedowns, but Ramon came back with a series of power moves that felled Backlund. Backlund reversed a whip and missed a dropkick, but deliv-

ered a beautiful suplex. After stunning Ramon with an atomic drop, Backlund appeared to be in complete control.

Backlund apparently thought so, too, because he made a fatal mistake. Thinking Ramon was ripe for the pin, Backlund tried to lift Ramon for a slam. But the much larger Ramon reversed the momentum and rolled up Backlund with an inside cradle.

THE WINNER: Ramon, by pinfall at 3:44.

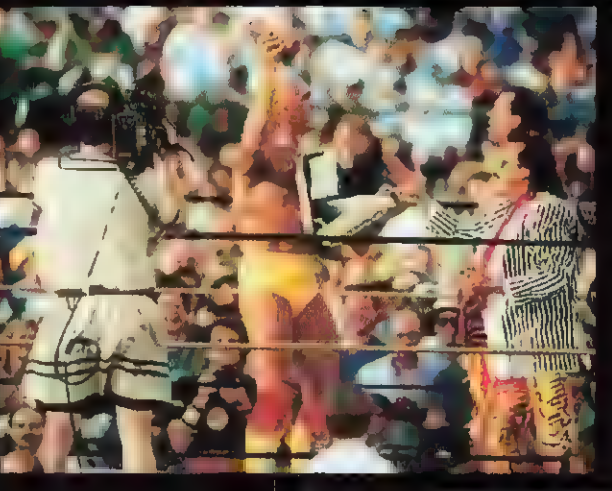
THE REAL WINNER: Ramon, who with the upset victory is back on the title trail. The fans seemed to like it, too. They chanted, "Razor! Razor!" throughout the match.

THE REAL LOSER: Backlund. The former WWF World champion suffered a critical blow to his comeback hopes. Backlund had been wrestling very well in the weeks leading up to WrestleMania and seemed primed for a major victory. With this loss, a clean pin at the hands of Ramon, Backlund must carefully plot out his next move. He lost to





Left: Brutus Beefcake introduces Ted DiBiase to Hulk Hogan's boot. Below left: DiBiase didn't want to meet Hogan's clothesline, either!



Above: Hogan reveals the brick hidden in Irwin R. Schyster's briefcase!

one of the worst underachievers in wrestling history!

THE MATCH: Money Inc. vs. The Megamaniacs, with manager Jimmy Hart, for Money Inc.'s WWF World tag team title.

THE ACTION: Hulk Hogan and Brutus Beefcake were fired up even before the opening bell. They stormed the ring and dumped Ted DiBiase and Irwin R. Schyster over the ropes, sending the crowd into a frenzy.

The first seven minutes was all Megamaniacs. DiBiase hurt his hand by repeatedly pounding Beefcake's protective face mask. Hogan made his entrance at 3:34 and floored

DiBiase with a series of right hands and two thunderous clotheslines. When IRS was hammered by DiBiase and Hogan, Money Inc. decided to take a walk.

Their stroll was curtailed by referee Dave Hebner, who ruled Money Inc. must return to the ring in 10 seconds or



Bob Backlund takes Razor Ramon down with a beel throw.

lose their belts. DiBiase and IRS hurried back and made it in with only two seconds to spare.

The breather served its purpose. Money Inc. finally took control of the match, and DiBiase caught Hogan in his "Million-Dollar Dream" sleeper. Hogan

was caught in the hold for nearly two minutes. He fought back to his feet, but couldn't break the sleeper until Beefcake did it for him.

DiBiase spent nearly a minute trying to remove Beefcake's protective shield and finally succeeded. Money Inc. double-teamed Beefcake, but "The Barber" wouldn't succumb and actually clamped his sleeper on IRS. DiBiase, trying to break the hold, ran into Hebner. Hebner, DiBiase and Beefcake were laid out on the canvas.

Hogan tagged in and floored DiBiase. He wrested the mask from DiBiase and used it on both DiBiase and IRS. Hogan covered DiBiase. Beefcake covered IRS. With Hebner still unconscious, Hart turned his jacket into a referee's uniform and counted the

pins. The Megamaniacs grabbed the belts!

No dice. Referee Danny Davis, who had been watching the match from the runway area, rushed to the ring and rendered a decision.

THE WINNER: Money Inc., by disqualification at 17:45.

THE REAL WINNER: Dave Hebner. The WWF's most respected referee made a courageous move when he ordered Money Inc. back to the ring. Some might say a referee has no right to make such decisions, but even if he was bluffing, Money Inc. was not taking any chances.

Money Inc. thought it could save its belts by walking away from the match. No way, Hebner said. Because of Hebner's courage, the fans weren't cheated and The Megamaniacs had a fair shot at the title.

THE REAL LOSER: Jimmy Hart. The manager banked on The Megamaniacs winning the belts, but it didn't happen. Now Hart is left without a title and, in reality, without a team. When Hogan won the World title later in the day, the future of The Megamaniacs was left in doubt. Because Hart isn't trusted by the rulebreakers or most fan favorites—with the exception of Hogan and Beefcake—he'll have a hard time finding another good job.

THE MATCH: Curt Hennig vs. Lex Luger.

THE ACTION: "Mr. Perfect" has a reputation for being one of the smartest wrestlers in the world, but the "Narcissist" showed plenty of smarts, too.

Hennig spent most of the



Above and right: Curt Hennig wrestled an almost-perfect match against "Narcissist" Lex Luger.



Luger's massive ego is reflected by his overblown ring entrance.

match working on Luger's off-injured left knee. Luger, meanwhile, worked on Hennig's faulty back. Strategies were perfectly executed, and it was easy to see why both men have such huge egos. They've earned them.

Luger had consecutive near-pinfalls with seven minutes gone, before Hennig reversed with a sunset flip for a two-count

of his own. Luger tried to whip "Mr. Perfect" into the ropes, but Hennig reversed again with an inside cradle for

another near-fall.

Hennig took command. A right hand floored the "Narcissist" for another two-count. Hennig delivered two thundering clotheslines and almost got the pin. There was a suplex, and another two-count, a dropkick from the top rope, and another two-count.

The match came down to a battle of backslides. It was the only battle Luger needed to win. With Hennig's feet draped over the middle rope, Luger made the cover.

THE WINNER: Luger, by pinfall at 10:55.

THE REAL WINNER: Hennig. Yes, Hennig. WrestleMania isn't merely a place where feuds are settled and titles are won. It's also a place where feuds are begun.

Luger scored another in his series of celebrated knockouts when he drove Hennig to the canvas after the match. He posed in the mirror, then returned to the dressing rooms through a parking lot, where he stopped to speak with Shawn Michaels.

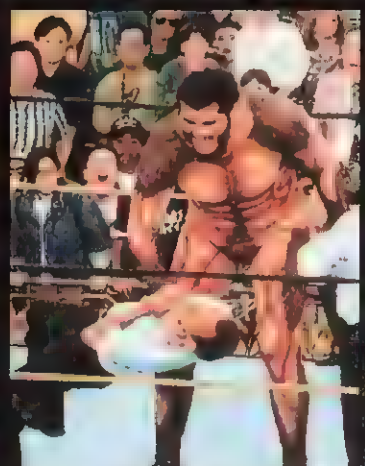
But Hennig recovered and attacked Luger in the lot. Michaels got involved and attacked Hennig, setting off a wild brawl that was separated by several officials who were standing nearby.

It doesn't take a genius to figure out this one. Hennig is a former Intercontinental champion. Michaels is the current I-C champ. And away they go!

THE MATCH: The Undertaker, with manager Paul Bearer, vs. Giant Gonzales, with manager Harvey Wippleman.



Undertaker won his battle of the giants with Giant Gonzales.



Gonzales wasn't thrilled by the match outcome!

THE ACTION: Gonzales had a huge height advantage over Undertaker and used it to literally hold off his opponent the entire match. With 2:16 gone, Undertaker walked right into Gonzales' big right foot. Gonzales applied the sleeper and kept it on for over a minute.

It looked as if Undertaker was finished. When Bearer raised his urn, Undertaker fought his way up, and Gonzales pushed him out of the ring. Undertaker went on the attack and slowed Gonzales before both men returned to the ring. Gonzales and Undertaker each used their power to trade the advantage. Incredibly, Undertaker drove Gonzales to his knees with a series of punches. With Gonzales hobbled, Undertaker turned his attention to Wippleman and lifted the manager by his throat.

But Gonzales had recovered and delivered a headbutt to Bearer. Then he pulled out a white cloth, apparently soaked with chloroform, and placed it on Undertaker's face. The referee tried to stop Gonzales, then called for the bell.

THE WINNER:

Undertaker, by disqualification at 7:33.

THE REAL WINNER:

Undertaker. Unable to move and seemingly unconscious, Undertaker was removed on a stretcher. Gonzales celebrated by choking the referee and slamming him to the mat.

Then the unbelievable happened. Undertaker walked

out from the dressing room, climbed back into the ring, and clotheslined Gonzales to the mat!

You can't kill what's already dead. And Undertaker refuses to die ... again!

ANOTHER WINNER:

Hulk Hogan. The Gonzales-Undertaker feud still isn't over, and Hogan won't have to worry about dealing with any giants until the feud is done.

Right: Bret Hart's clothes-line connects on Yokozuna.

THE MATCH: Bret Hart vs. Yokozuna, with manager Mr. Fuji, for Hart's WWF World title.

THE ACTION: A classic matchup of science vs. power unfolded exactly as projected. A legdrop by Yokozuna with 3:09 gone had the "Hitman" writhing on the mat in pain. Yokozuna applied pressure on Hart's shoulder nerves, and it looked as if the champion would have to submit. But

the sumo master made a mistake.

Yokozuna followed with an Irish whip before Hart lifted up his leg and booted his challenger in the face. That presented Hart with his first pinfall opportunity of the match. Yokozuna escaped at the two-count. Yokozuna tried another Irish whip. Hart moved out of the way and turned a variation of the bulldog headlock into a two-count.

Hart briefly went on the offensive, but Yokozuna



Above: The sumo master responds with a precision savate kick.

Below: Yokozuna won't let Hart back in the ring.



Above: Once Hart is in, though, Mr. Fuji unleashes a blinding cloud of salt.



Right: Yokozuna exults in his World title victory.

Hogan makes the challenge.

for the pin.

The Yokozuna-Hogan match lasted only 25 seconds. Yokozuna's first title reign lasted 2 minutes, 7 seconds. Hogan began his fifth World title reign under stunning circumstances.

THE REAL LOSER: Bret Hart. Sure, Yokozuna and Fuji needlessly sacrificed the belt with their bravado, and Hebner never should have allowed the Yokozuna-Hogan match to take place. (He never even called for the opening bell.) But Hart finished the day in bad shape.

If WrestleMania IX ended with Yokozuna's win over Hart, then at least the "Hitman" would have been entitled to several rematches.

Now he's really in trouble. Hogan has the belt, Yokozuna is his most likely challenger, and I-C champ Shawn Michaels is also in line for title shots.

Hart, the fan favorite, won't get any matches against Hogan ... unless he changes his ways. It was just an all-around bad day for the "Hitman."

Hogan celebrates his World title victory with Brutus Beefcake and WWF head Vince McMahon.

wrapped up Hart in a waistlock and lifted him like a baby. Hart grabbed onto the turnbuckle and Yokozuna pulled him away, causing the turnbuckle strap to snap.

Yokozuna, thinking quickly, tried to smash Hart's face into the exposed metal. Hart reacted quicker, blocked it with his hands, and slammed Yokozuna into the steel. He then tied Yokozuna into the "sharpshooter" leglock. Trapped in Hart's devastating finishing maneuver, Yokozuna appeared to be done, but Fuji ran to the apron and threw salt in Hart's eyes. Yokozuna covered Hart and hooked his legs.

THE WINNER:

Yokozuna, by pinfall at 8:55.

THE REAL WINNER:

Hulk Hogan. The "Hulkster" ran out from the dressing room area to argue with referee Dave Hebner and console Hart. Meanwhile, Fuji grabbed the ring microphone and issued an on-the-spot challenge to Hogan.

Hogan, after some prodding from Hart and the crowd, accepted the challenge. The match began and Yokozuna immediately went on the attack. Fuji, who never left the ring, threw salt at Hogan's face. Hogan ducked and the salt blinded Yokozuna. Hogan delivered a clothesline to floor the new champion, then finished him off with a legdrop

Left:
The salt fails.
Below left:
The clothesline connects!

Above: Blinded and flat on the mat, Yokozuna is easy prey for Hogan's legendary legdrop.

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

CLOSE-UP

SHAWN MICHAELS

THE WWF INTERCONTINENTAL champion is one of the most arrogant men in wrestling, but he is also one of the finest scientific and aerial wrestlers . . . Has proven himself in tag team and singles matches against the very best . . . Born in San Antonio, Texas, where he was an outstanding high school athlete, excelling in wrestling and gymnastics . . . Went after his dream of becoming a pro wrestler immediately after high school . . . Went to wrestling school and was trained by Jose Lothario . . . Made his debut in the Mid-South area in 1985, beating Art Crews in his first match . . . Traveled to the Central States area, where he met Marty Jannetty . . . Jannetty and Michaels would later become The Midnight Rockers, but they didn't immediately form a team . . . Michaels was too busy getting his career into high gear, and he did so by winning the Central States TV title . . . Also won the Texas All-Star tag team title with Paul Diamond . . . Meanwhile, Michaels and Jannetty were forging a friendship . . . The two came to a fateful agreement—whoever reached a major organization first would call the other . . . Jannetty made the first move and signed with the AWA . . . Michaels joined him soon afterward, and The Midnight Rockers were born . . . Young, talented, and extremely popular with AWA fans, the Rockers were on their way . . . Quickly worked their way up the tag team ladder and began a feud with Buddy Rose and Doug Somers, winning the AWA World tag team title from them on January 27, 1987, in St. Paul, Minnesota . . . Issued an open challenge to any team in the world, and suffered a shocking upset loss to Boris Zukhov and Soldat Ustinov on May 25 in Lake Tahoe, Nevada . . . The title changed hands several times before the Rockers regained it . . . Fended with the "Original" Midnight Express of Dennis Condrey and Randy Rose, managed by Paul E. Dangerously . . . On December 27 in Las Vegas, The Midnight Rockers were awarded the belts by AWA President Stanley Blackburn, who overruled the Express' controversial pinfall victory . . . Lost the belts on March 19, 1988, to Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond . . . Jumped to the WWF in 1989 and changed their name to The Rockers . . . Entered into a feud against The Rougeaus and contested a memorable 60-minute marathon match . . . The bout was tied at two falls after 60 minutes, and Michaels pinned Jacques Rougeau in overtime . . . Over the following months, feuded with The Hart Foundation as well as Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard . . . Showed off their incredible aerial skills by overwhelming the much larger team of The Powers of Pain . . . Had their momentum slowed with a shocking loss to the newly formed team of Jim Powers and Paul Roma at SummerSlam '90 . . . Shortly afterward, Michaels underwent surgery on his right knee and missed over a month . . . Team seemed to be headed downward in the WWF, until October 30, when they defeated The Hart Foundation in a best-of-three-falls match for the World tag team title . . . Days later, WWF President Jack Tunney rescinded the victory because



the top rope had been knocked off the cornerpost during the second fall, causing the ropes to sag . . . Defeated The Barbarian and Haku at WrestleMania VII, but were never able to get over the anger and disappointment with the Tunney decision . . . Late in the year, dissension started brewing . . . They often argued during matches and rumors circulated The Rockers were on the verge of a breakup . . . A critical turning point in their relationship occurred against The Nasty Boys at Survivor Series '91 . . . Jannetty bodyslammed Jerry Sags, but Sags' leg knocked Michaels to the mat. Brian Knobs pinned Michaels and a heated argument ensued between The Rockers . . . The breakup finally occurred on an edition of Brutus Beefcake's "Barber Shop" . . . The Rockers appeared to have reconciled their differences when Michaels shockingly blindsided Jannetty . . . In January 1992, Sensational

Sherri set her sights on the new singles star and became Michaels' manager . . . With Sherri behind him, Michaels began billing himself as the "Boy Toy" . . . On April 29, defeated I-C champion Bret Hart by countout when Hart was hit from behind by Sherri . . . Was unable to wrest the title from Hart in subsequent rematches . . . Went after WWF World champion Randy Savage, but couldn't beat him, either . . . Agreed to wrestle Rick Martel at SummerSlam '92 in a match where neither man would hit each other in the face in order to protect their good looks . . . Meanwhile, Sherri was sending out signals that she was no longer interested in Michaels and had her eyes on Martel . . . When Michaels saw Martel flirting with Sherri at ringside, he hit "The Model" in the face . . . Began feuding with Tatanka, Virgil, and I-C champion Davey Boy Smith . . . In October, Jannetty returned to the WWF and was at ringside for Michaels' match against Jim Brunzell . . . Michaels was shocked to see Jannetty . . . Finally won the I-C title, defeating Davey Boy Smith on October 27 in Terre Haute, Indiana, without the presence of Sherri . . . In an interview after his title victory, Michaels said Sherri ought to "sit at home like a woman should" . . . Days earlier, had used Sherri as a shield to fend off an attack by Jannetty . . . Lost to World champion Bret Hart in a grueling, hotly contested match at Survivor Series '92 . . . Continued his feud against Jannetty and scored several impressive pinfall victories, despite Sherri's support of Jannetty . . . The feud culminated at The Royal Rumble, when Michaels pinned Jannetty after Sherri interfered and accidentally hit Jannetty with her shoe . . . Tarnished his belt with controversial matches against Tatanka and cowardly actions against Bob Backlund . . . Tatanka defeated Michaels in a non-title match and also pinned him in a six-man match in early-1993 . . . At WrestleMania IX, lost by countout to Tatanka, who had the support of Sherri at ringside . . . Michaels was joined by Luna Vachon, who attacked Sherri after the match . . . Later became involved in a brawl with Curt Hennig . . . Bracing for another difficult feud but knows how to prevail in tough situations. □

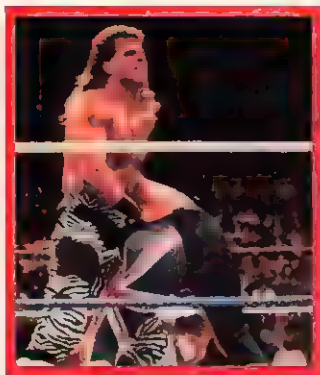
PRO Wrestling
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SHAWN MICHAELS
"The Boy Toy"





CLOSE-UP



FAVORITE MANEUVER

Flying dropkick. Michaels developed his aerial skills while teaming with Marty Jannetty in The Midnight Rockers and still employs them as a singles star. Of course, this is not to say that Michaels only uses dropkicks to finish off foes. He is an excellent on-the-mat wrestler with superb technical skills and the ability to counter any attack.



MOST HATED OPPONENT

Tatanka. The undefeated Native American has given Michaels plenty of trouble. He has beaten Michaels in non-title matches and embarrassed him with wanton chop attacks. He has also targeted him in tag team matches and battle royals. It was Tatanka who came to aid of Sensational Sherri at WrestleMania IX. Michaels has no any use for Sherri and despises anyone affiliated with her.

GREATEST MATCH

October 27, 1992, vs. Davey Boy Smith. Michaels had been pursuing the Intercontinental title for six months when he finally broke through against the "British Bulldog." He removed the padding from a turnbuckle and Irish-whipped Smith into the corner. Minutes later, Smith's back gave out attempting a powerslam and Michaels scored the pinfall victory.




TOUGHEST OPPONENT

Bret Hart. Without a doubt, the "Hitman" has been the biggest thorn in Michaels' side. Michaels was unable to capture the Intercontinental title from Hart in a variety of matches in 1992, including a ladder match in August. Once Hart became World champion, Michaels came after him again, with the same lack of success. These two are probably the best technicians in the WWF.



DOES VAN HAMMER HAVE THE TOOLS TO NAIL DOWN THE NWA TITLE?



Motorcycle-loving Van Hammer is on the verge of the biggest battle of his life: matches against Barry Windham for the NWA World title. Does the inexperienced Hammer have what it takes to defeat a second-generation superstar?

By Dave Rosenbaum

SOME PEOPLE SAY he's too young. Van Hammer just laughs.

"Too young?" Hammer says. "Since when is youth not an asset in sports?"

Some people say he doesn't have enough experience. Van Hammer laughs again.

"You show me any one-on-one sport and it's the youngest guys who do the best," Hammer says. "Tennis, golf, figure skating, the ones who are the youngest have the least experience, but it doesn't seem to bother them at all."

Others say he spends too much time with his motorcycles and not enough time in the gym.

"Who said that?" Hammer asks incredulously. "Now they're really reaching."

Maybe. Maybe not.

"Hammer's got a world of tal-

ent, but I don't think he realizes how tough it is to win a major title," said Sting, one of Hammer's closest friends in WCW. "You think you're there, but you're not. It's like you're driving on a road, you come around a bend and the city is right in front of you, you can see it, and you think you're there. But then the road curves and it takes you to the city in a roundabout way."

Make no mistake: Sting would love to see Hammer beat Barry Windham for the NWA title. Hammer has energized the federation and inspired the "Stinger" with his wild, carefree attitude about life, wrestling, and, of course, motor-driven two-wheel vehicles.

"Everything I love about wrestling, he's got it," Sting said. "He just has the perfect attitude. Now he's going to be really tested."

Let's put the test in perspective. At the start of the year, Hammer was a relative newcomer coming off of a successful feud against Cactus Jack. He was still wrestling on the middle of cards against journeymen and in under-card tag team events.

In February, Hammer wasn't asked to wrestle on WCW's SuperBrawl III pay-per-view card. At the time, he was wrestling only once or twice a week and hadn't come close to breaking into the WCW top 15, let alone the top 10.

He finally cracked the top 10 with impressive victories over Vinnie Vegas, only to fall right out again. A key turning point for Hammer was when he was invited to go on WCW's tour of the United Kingdom. Hammer defeated Scotty Flamingo and Maxx Payne, and got a taste of the big time in a tough loss to former U.S. champion Rick Rude.

"That match taught me something, that and the time-limit draw against Payne in Birmingham," Hammer said. "I came back a few days later in Aberdeen, Scot-



Van Hammer made his first big step toward the top by scoring impressive victories over Cactus Jack (above). However, Rick Rude demonstrates that Hammer has a long way to go (below).





Hammer can wrestle (above and below) as well as brawl (top right). Nevertheless, many observers believe he is far from being good enough to win the NWA belt from Barry Windham.



land, and beat him, and I think it's because I became a better wrestler in the match against Rude."

Hammer was rewarded with a jump to eighth in the WCW ratings, his highest ranking to that point. He has since dominated his feud with Vegas to move as high as sixth.

But there's a big difference between Vinnie Vegas and Barry Windham. Windham, a second-generation superstar, has held numerous titles and fought the best wrestlers in the world to virtual standstills. He defeated The Great Muta for the NWA title at Super-Brawl while Hammer was home watching on television.

"That's the last time I'll ever watch a WCW match on pay-per-view," Hammer said. "I plan on being in them from now on."

Nobody has any doubt Hammer will develop into a top main-event wrestler. *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* ranked him at number 204 in the *PWI* 500 (December '92), pointing out that Hammer "impressed during his debut stint in WCW."

Hammer has been impressive, but there are many people who feel he will learn a few more lessons from Windham.

At 6'5", 290 pounds, Hammer usually has a height and weight advantage over his opponent. Not this time: Windham is 6'5", 263 pounds, the perfect build for wres-

(Continued on page 66)

DAMNED YANKEE:

HOW THE SOUTH IS RISING AGAINST TONY ANTHONY

The Dirty White Boy had no idea how many enemies he'd make when he turned against the South. Tony Anthony, Northerner even Northerners hate, is waging his own civil war against Smoky Mountain Wrestling . . . and losing.

By Dave Rosenbaum

TRACEY SMOTHERS HAD no idea what he was getting himself into. There hadn't been a chain match in Tennessee for over 15 years. Smothers had never wrestled in a chain match or even saw one in person.

"There were no strategies for me to think about," Smothers said. "I didn't even know anyone who had wrestled in a chain match, so I just decided to treat it as if it was an ordinary match. I was wrong, but it didn't matter. I had the South on my side."

The whole South, and nothing but the South. Wrestling crowds tend to be mixed these days. Fans are as likely to support rulebreakers as they are to back fan favorites. Perhaps they are more liberal, more open-minded, and can see the good and bad in anyone.

But on April 2, there weren't many people in Pikeville, Kentucky, who saw any good in "Dirty White Boy" Tony Anthony. Here was a true Southern renegade, only Anthony had turned





Tracey Smothers intends to make Tony Anthony pay respect to the Confederate flag (opposite page). Anthony's "conversion" to being a Northerner has served only to further enrage Smothers (right).



against his own people and was worthy of nothing but contempt.

Anthony has turned Smoky Mountain Wrestling into his own civil war and Smothers led the South's rise against this dirtiest of white boys. He fulfilled his promise to beat Anthony in the chain match and won the SMW heavyweight title. Smothers spilled his blood for the South, but he figured it wasn't anything his ancestors hadn't done before.

"This isn't about states' rights or anything like that," said Smothers, a native of Atlanta. "That's old news and in my mind there shouldn't be any animosity between Northerners and Southerners. That's the whole point here. Anthony isn't from the North, he's from Tennessee, and he's turning against his own people."

There has never been a more colorful or unusual turn than Anthony's two-man battle (manager Ron Wright



For Anthony, an appropriate use of the Confederate flag is using it to choke Smothers. The "Dirty White Boy" claims to be a New Yorker, but knows little about life north of the Mason-Dixon line.

is also for the cause) against SMW, Tennessee, and anything south of the Mason-Dixon line. The "Dirty White Boy" is clearly in it to anger his enemies, and he's done a good job.

In one shocking and somewhat amusing display, Anthony, while wearing a New York Yankees jacket, set aflame the Confederate flag belonging to Smothers.

When quizzed, Anthony displays his shocking ignorance of Northern ways and customs, but he claims to be a full-fledged, soft pretzel-eating North-

erner who's dying to bring a title back to New York, New York, his adopted hometown.

If he can make it there, he'll make it anywhere? No dice. Anthony has never even been to New York.

"He's acting like a little baby," fan favorite Brian Lee said. "The guy is obviously trying to get everyone angry. Either that or he's gone totally out of his mind. Listen, I'm from Los Angeles, so I'm not really even a part of this. It's just that Anthony should be proud of the South and the kind of



Smothers' blows have Anthony woozy. Smothers doesn't care as much about the Smoky Mountain title as he does embarrassing Anthony.

wrestling we have down here. If you ask me, he's just insecure."

Smothers' victory in the chain match was a prime example of how emotional people have become over Anthony's tactics. He was bloody and seemingly injured, but simply refused to lose the match. There was too much at stake.

"It wasn't even the title that drove me," Smothers said. "That was like a little added extra, but I'm real glad Anthony doesn't have the belt anymore."

Even Anthony's friends are shaking their heads and privately condemning his tactics. Some of them have spoken with Anthony in an attempt to get him to change his ways. Nothing has worked. Anthony sees that his new attitude is angering people, which is just what he wants.

But Anthony has already lost his title, his friends, and his self-respect because of this stupid little war. Anthony claims to have moved to New York, but even that's not true. A *PWI* staffer called Anthony at his "old" home in Bucksport, Tennessee. Anthony answered the phone.



Anthony begs for mercy, but Smothers isn't listening (top). Unlike the "Dirty White Boy," Smothers is proud of his Southern heritage (above).

"No, this isn't Tony Anthony," said a man who sounded exactly like Anthony.

"Then who is it?" our caller said.

"I don't have to tell you," the man

said. Then he hung up the phone.

A few days later, another call was made to Anthony's home in Bucksport. A different man answered the phone.

"Yeah, this is Ron Wright," the man said. "Who wants to know?"

"Well, this is *PWI* magazine," our caller said. "And what are you doing in Tennessee when you're supposed to be living in New York?"

Wright, realizing his mistake, mumbled incoherently and hung up the phone. Several days later, Anthony confronted a *PWI* photographer.

"Don't you guys ever call me again," Anthony said. "My number has been disconnected. I live in Manhattan now."

Sure, and Clark Gable didn't give a damn. Anthony says he doesn't give a damn about the South, but you can still find him eating, working, and walking on southern soil.

"That's the part that gets me," Smothers said. "If he hates the South so much, why doesn't he just go wrestle up north? There are plenty of federations up there."

Smothers is doing his best to push Anthony north. He isn't pushing alone.

□

LEX LUGER AND MR. HUGHES:



Together Again—As Partners Or Rivals?



Lex Luger has both accepted Hughes' advice as bodyguard (opposite page) and battled him (left). When Luger won the WCW World title in 1991, Hughes stood right behind him (above).

Mr. Hughes was Lex Luger's bodyguard in WCW. Now both men are wrestling in the WWF, but they've yet to get together. When they do, will Hughes and Luger rekindle their relationship? Or will they ignite the flames of hatred?

By Dave Rosenbaum

WAS IT MERE coincidence, or was the timing just too good for that to be true? Was Mr. Hughes lying in wait, or did he form some kind of secret pact with Lex Luger? Is

this a case of interfederation revenge, or will Luger and Hughes move in separate directions?

There are so many questions regarding Luger and Hughes in the WWF, but so few answers. For now, let's only deal with the facts.

FACT: Luger, the former WCW World champion, was a member of Harley Race's stable in WCW. Hughes, also a member of Race's "Half-Ton of Holy Hell," was Luger's bodyguard.

FACT: Luger was the top gun in

Hughes battled Scott Steiner in WCW and may yet target him in the WWF. However, he is more likely to seek out Luger.



Race's stable while Hughes was often ignored.

FACT: Luger left Race, and WCW, after losing to Sting at SuperBrawl II on February 29, 1992. Luger showed up later in Vince McMahon's World Bodybuilding Federation.

FACT: Even after Luger's departure, Hughes was the forgotten man in Race's stable, overshadowed by Big Van Vader and Vinnie Vegas.

FACT: After the WBF's failure, Luger signed with the WWF and made his first appearance as "The Narcisist" on January 24 at the Royal Rumble.

FACT: Hughes made his WWF debut on March 9 with a victory over J.D. Stryker.

FACT: Luger scored an important victory over Curt Hennig at WrestleMania IX.

FACT: Hughes has crushed his WWF competition.

FACT: Hughes may feel he has a score to settle with Luger. He was on the short end of a feud with the "Total Package" in WCW in 1990, when Luger was still a fan favorite.

Now that we've gathered all the facts, let's try and make some sense out of them. We'll apply a little logic and add information garnered from several WWF and WCW sources. Then we'll arrive at this very reasonable conclusion:

Whether as partners or rivals, Lex Luger and Mr. Hughes are headed for some sort of reunion in the WWF!

"Luger's arrival in the WWF was a closely-guarded secret and Hughes didn't start negotiating with the federation until after the Royal Rumble," said a high-level WWF source who is involved with contracts. "Hughes didn't exactly drive a hard bargain. He wanted to be in the WWF no matter what it took."

Perhaps Hughes merely wanted the opportunity to continue his growth as a wrestler. After breaking with Race and becoming a fan favorite in WCW, Hughes jumped to the USWA and rapidly moved up the rankings. More recently, he ventured down to the



At WrestleMania IX, Luger was obsessed with defeating Curt Hennig. He may soon need the same focus to fight off a similar challenge from Hughes, who may be looking for revenge.

WWC, where he battled Carlos Colon for that promotion's Universal title. Hughes' move to the WWF proves the imposing 6'5", 308-pound suit-wearing brawler is once again serious about wrestling.

He wasn't serious for a long time. Luger used Mr. Hughes and forced him to be subservient. Hughes was a fine bodyguard, but he quickly forgot why he was in the sport in the first place: to wrestle.

"After Luger left, Hughes blamed him for ruining his career," a WWF rulebreaker said. "He thought he'd ride right to the top with Luger, but then Luger split and left him high and dry. Race had no use for Hughes because he never really wanted him in the first place."

Luger and Hughes have yet to meet publicly in the WWF. They haven't even acknowledged each other's presence. For all intents and purposes, Luger is concentrating on his own rapid rise through the WWF rankings, while Hughes is moving up slowly but surely.

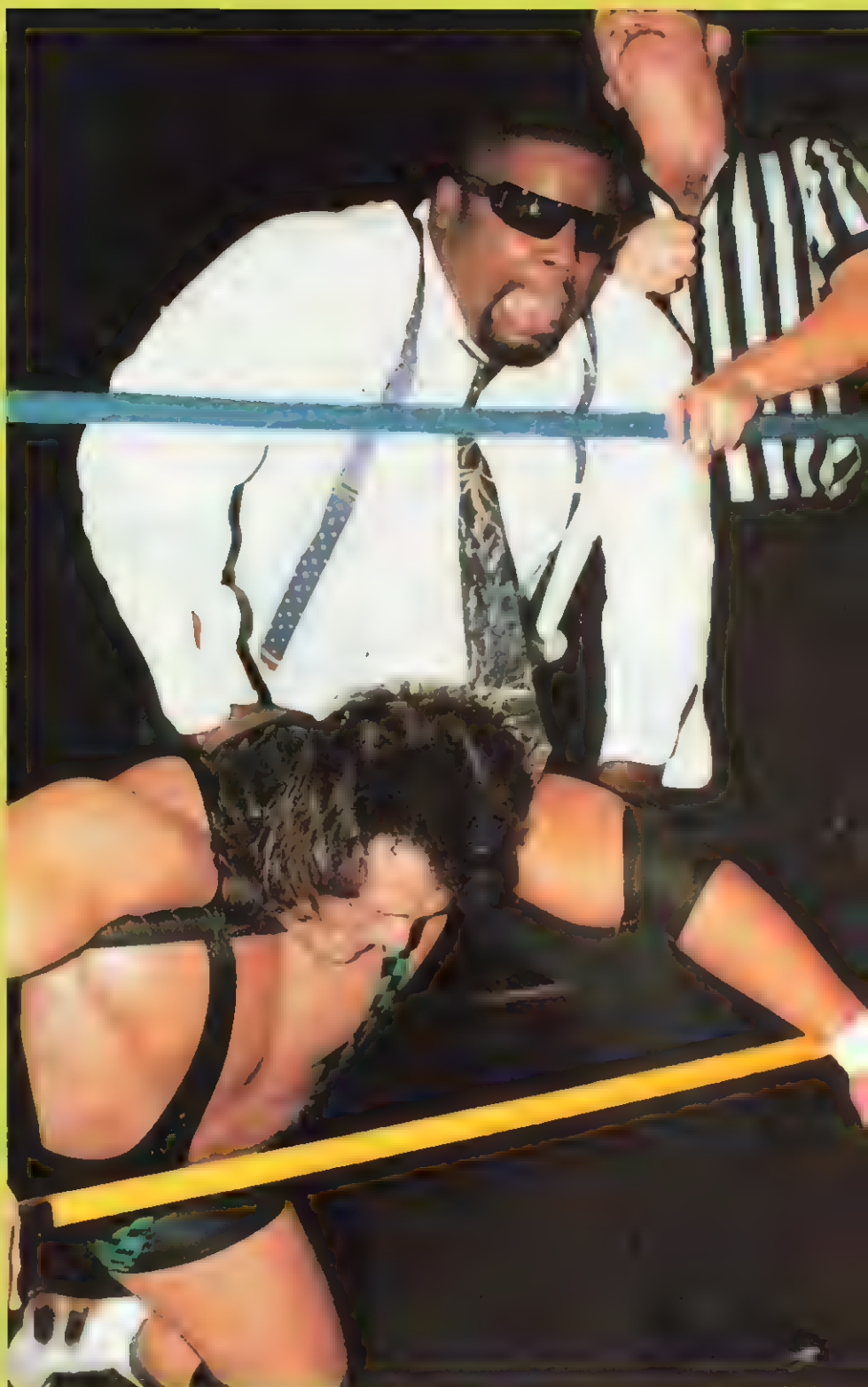
If both continue winning, eventually they'll meet at the top. And then Hughes will have a choice to make: Either go after Luger, or go with him.

"Luger needs help," WWF expert Thomas Pilliard said. "Everybody thought Bret Hart would be fair game for Luger after he lost the World title to Yokozuna, but Hart has wrestled very well against Luger. Luger's finding that things aren't as easy in the WWF as he thought they would be, and he might turn to Mr. Hughes."

Maybe Hughes sees Luger as a money-making machine who could make his life easier. Maybe Hughes sees Luger as a money-making machine who left him stranded. Maybe Hughes sees Luger as an enemy. Or maybe Luger is his potential employer.

And wouldn't it be something if they just kept on ignoring each other?

"That's not completely out of the question," a WWF rulebreaker said. "I've been around Luger a lot and he hasn't once mentioned Hughes. They don't even talk to each other in the



There is a possibility that Hughes once again may unleash his fury on others on behalf of Luger. If they do join forces, the "Narcissist" will be a lot more dangerous.

locker room. I think most of the guys in the room don't even know they were once together."

Isn't that just like the WWF? The past is forgotten and only the immediate present counts. Unless, of course, Luger and Hughes bring back the past with a bloody conclusion to their once-

friendly relationship.

Then again, how friendly was it?

"He was never my friend," Hughes said last summer. "He was only my boss."

Hughes must now decide what he needs more: a wrestling career, a friend . . . or another job. □

WRESTLING'S INSIDERS HAVE THEIR SAY

What does wrestling think about wrestling? In March, Pro Wrestling Illustrated mailed out 75 ballots worldwide in an effort to get some answers. In the first PWI poll, we asked 21 questions of a cross-section of the sport: champions, challengers, and preliminary wrestlers; managers and referees; commissioners and presidents; promoters and matchmakers; journalists, TV announcers, and photographers; and anyone else who contributes to the game. Some of their answers surprised us. They'll surprise you, too!



Jushin Liger



Ric Flair

**WHO IS, POUND
FOR POUND,
THE BEST
WRESTLER IN
THE WORLD?**

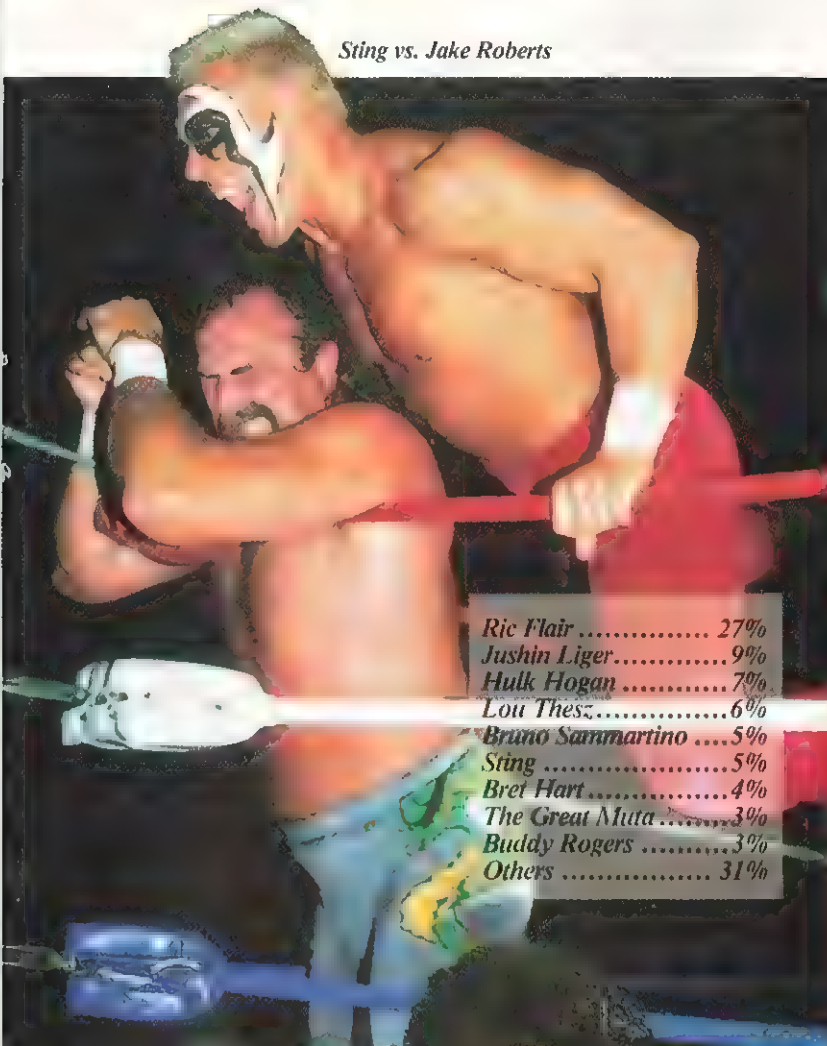
<i>Jushin Liger</i>	32%
<i>Bret Hart</i>	18%
<i>Jeff Jarrett</i>	12%
<i>Curt Hennig</i>	9%
<i>Ric Flair</i>	8%
<i>Others</i>	21%



Bret Hart

It was hard to be surprised by the results of this question because the answers were so spread out. The real heavyweights, such as Hulk Hogan, Big Van Vader, and Yokozuna, weren't even mentioned because of the pound-for-pound factor. At 5'6", 200 pounds, Japanese light heavyweight superstar Jushin Liger probably would have been an overwhelming winner had he campaigned more often in North America. USWA star Jeff Jarrett, who weighs 220 pounds, has quietly gained respect.

Sting vs. Jake Roberts



IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE WRESTLER, WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE?



Ric Flair vs. Brian Pillman

Flair has retained his appeal, despite the passing of time. Many insiders, however, added a note saying they wanted to see the Flair of the 1980s, not the current version. This was consistent with the aim of this vaguely worded question: to see how many insiders would name wrestlers from the past. Among the "others" mentioned were Jim Londos, Strangler Lewis, Frank Gotch, Bruiser Brody, and Verne Gagne. Interestingly, merchants of the sweet science won out over pure brawlers.

Rick & Scott Steiner



IF YOU COULD WATCH THE MATCHES OF ONLY ONE TAG TEAM, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Tag team combinations change so frequently that very few teams from the past were named. The wrestling world is obviously thirsting for a return by Hawk and Animal, The Legion of Doom, and many felt the tag team picture has been considerably weakened by their absence. With Hawk and Animal out of the picture, the Steiners' strong finish was practically a given. We were surprised they weren't

Rick & Scott Steiner 21%
The Legion of Doom 20%
The Heavenly Bodies 11%
The Freebirds 10%
The British Bulldogs 4%
The Hart Foundation 3%
The Rockers 3%
Rock 'n' Roll Express 3%
Ole & Gene Anderson 3%
Others 18%

named more often. One note: Every insider that named The Freebirds insisted on some combination of Michael Hayes, Buddy Roberts, and Terry Gordy.



Hulk Hogan

WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN BIG VAN VADER AND HULK HOGAN?

Big Van Vader 53%
Hulk Hogan 47%

The "Hulkster" still commands tremendous respect, despite his relative inactivity. Vader has been a dominant WCW World champion, and has proven himself overseas, but a large segment of insiders apparently believe "Hulkamania" can prevail under any circumstances.



Big Van Vader

WHICH NORTH AMERICAN FEDERATION HAS THE HIGHEST QUALITY WRESTLING?

WCW 68%
WWF 28%
Others 4%

We specifically worded this question so the insiders would ignore other factors when comparing federations, including attendance, arenas, TV production, and overall success. When wrestling is the only criteria, WCW is a hands-down winner over the WWF. The results of this question match our Top 10 ratings, where, in most months, WCW wrestlers occupy anywhere from five to seven spots. One insider commented, "You don't watch the WWF for wrestling. You watch it for entertainment. It's like going out to the movies."

WHICH IS THE DOMINANT FEDERATION IN NORTH AMERICA?

WWF 83%
WCW 6%
None 11%

This question had nothing to do with quality of wrestling or quality of anything else. It had to do with which federation wields the most power and has the most influence on the sport. The WWF, with its ability to attract superstars by waving huge amounts of money in their faces, is clearly the most popular federation in North America, judging by attendance, TV ratings, and public perception. To many people, the WWF is North American wrestling.

WHO WOULD WIN A MATCH BETWEEN STING AND BRET HART?

Hart 51%
Sting 49%

Considering a margin of error of plus or minus three percent, neither of our dream matches reached a conclusive decision. Rumors have circulated for years that Sting is on the verge of a jump from WCW to the WWF, but with Hulk Hogan winning the WWF World title, it appears a jump by Hart is more likely. It's hard to believe this match will never happen.

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WRESTLING'S IMMEDIATE FUTURE AS HOPELESS, CLOUDY, STATUS QUO, PROMISING, OR SHINING?

<i>Cloudy</i>	25%
<i>Status Quo</i>	32%
<i>Promising</i>	35%
<i>Shining</i>	5%
<i>Hopeless</i>	3%

We had no way of breaking down the returns on any question because ballots were returned anonymously. Our guess is that the wrestlers, managers, matchmakers, publicists, and promoters accounted for the vast majority of the "promising" and "shining" vote, while the media, referees, and officials accounted for the vast majority of the "status quo," "cloudy," and "hopeless" vote. But all is not lost. Although attendance is down in almost all areas, most people thought wrestling wasn't in bad shape at all.

Jim Cornette

WHO IS WRESTLING'S BEST MANAGER?

<i>Jim Cornette</i>	60%
<i>Jimmy Hart</i>	25%
<i>Bobby Heenan</i>	7%
<i>Mr. Fuji</i>	3%
<i>Others</i>	5%

Overwhelming support for Cornette, the devious and ingenious manager of The Heavenly Bodies. The "Louisville Slugger" dominates any federation he's in with his often abrasive personality, but there's no doubt he gets the job done for his wrestlers. "A Cornette wrestler doesn't get cheated," wrote one insider. Paul E. Dangerously received a handful of votes despite his recent absence.

Bobby Heenan



Jimmy Hart



Mr. Fuji



IF YOU COULD WATCH A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH AT ANY VENUE, WHERE WOULD IT BE?

Madison Square Garden . 69%
 The Tokyo Dome 9%
 Baltimore Arena..... 8%
 The Omni 5%
 Kiel Auditorium..... 4%
 Others 5%

There was a streak when the WWF World title changed hands only at "The World's Most Famous Arena." That streak is over, but Madison Square Garden is still a special place for special matches. The Tokyo Dome was a surprising second. Apparently, insiders enjoy mixing with Tokyo's knowledgeable fans and extensive media. No one named Atlanta's Center Stage Theater.



SHOULD WRESTLING HAVE A MANDATORY RETIREMENT AGE?

Yes 12%
 No..... 88%

Having seen older wrestlers such as Verne Gagne, Buddy Rogers, and Lou Thesz dominate in their golden years, the insiders aren't ready to get rid of wrestling's Gordie Howes, Jack Nicklauses, and Nolan Ryans. If a man is deemed fit to wrestle by licensed physicians, then age shouldn't be a factor.

DO YOU THINK STEROID USE IS STILL PREVALENT IN WRESTLING?

Yes 41%
 No..... 59%

Vince McMahon and other promoters have done a good job cleaning up the sport—with a lot of prompting from the media and the public—but that first number shows the sport isn't as clean as we would hope. Muscleheads are still prevalent in wrestling; in other words, the sport's cumulative muscle mass hasn't shrunk much in one year.

WILL RIC FLAIR WIN HIS 10TH WORLD TITLE?

Yes 38%
 No..... 62%

Ah, there was so little faith in the seven-time former WCW World and two-time former WWF World champion. Or maybe our respondents thought the current WCW talent pool is just too dense. Flair has aged well, but his two WWF World titles were steeped in controversy and he does, indeed, seem to be slowing down.



Buddy Rogers & Lou Thesz



WHO IS THE BEST TELEVISION COMMENTATOR?

<i>Jim Ross</i>	33%
<i>Jesse Ventura</i>	29%
<i>Tony Schiavone</i>	27%
<i>Bobby Heenan</i>	2%
<i>Gorilla Monsoon</i>	2%
<i>Others</i>	7%

WCW had him. The WWF has him. Jim Ross is wrestling's voice of authority, a facts-first play-by-play man with encyclopedic knowledge of the sport's history, rules, and moves. Ross made the jump to the WWF for WrestleMania IX without batting an eye. Nobody knows the sport and is better connected than Ross.

Now for the surprise:

Legendary announcer Gordon Solie received only a handful of votes. As his air time decreases, Solie is sadly and unfortunately being forgotten.



Tony Schiavone

SHOULD ALL TITLES CHANGES HANDS ON DISQUALIFICATIONS AND COUNTOUTS?

<i>Yes</i>	76%
<i>No</i>	24%

If a boxing champion walks away from a match, he loses his title. If he is disqualified for low blows, he loses his title. Only in wrestling can a champion lose and still retain his belt. That's ridiculous, our insiders opined. A champion should have to win it or lose it. But, for various reasons, most federations have been hesitant to alter the disqualification rule.

Jim Ross



Jesse Ventura





ARE THE BEST OF TODAY'S WRESTLERS AS GOOD AS THE BEST OF THOSE 40 YEARS AGO?

Yes 66%
No..... 34%

Hogan vs. Thesz. Flair vs. Longson. Sting vs. Rogers. Vader vs. Kiniski. Who would win these time-machine battles? Well, according to our insiders, the best wrestlers of today would beat the best wrestlers of yesteryear. Today's athletes are bigger, stronger, and faster.

IS PAY-PER-VIEW GOOD FOR WRESTLING?

Yes 77%
No..... 23%

Some might say pay-per-view TV *is* wrestling. These days, every major card—with the exception of WCW's Clash of the Champions—is available on PPV. Anyone who has attended a PPV event will attest that the card is built around the TV audience. PPV has enabled millions of fans to see the truly big matches. Unfortunately, there's not much left for free TV.

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE MAINSTREAM MEDIA COVERAGE OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?

Poor 92%
Mediocre 6%
Good 2%
Excellent..... 0%

Most newspapers completely ignored WrestleMania IX. Hulk Hogan's return wasn't deemed worthy of mention on most news telecasts. Rabid wrestling fans stay up-to-date on the sport through subscriptions to *PWI Weekly*, 900 number hotlines, private newsletters, and on-line computer networks. Looking for the latest ring news? Don't look to the mass media.

Sting

Buddy Rogers

WORLD



Nick Patrick



Dave Hebner

WOULD YOU GAUGE THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION OF WRESTLING AS POOR, MEDIOCRE, GOOD, OR EXCELLENT?

Poor	44%
Mediocre	33%
Good	22%
Excellent.....	1%

Wrestling went through its golden years of widespread acceptance during the mid-1980s, when the rock 'n' wrestling phenomenon took off. But it has since dropped several notches in the eyes of the general public. The 1992 steroid controversy hurt wrestling's image, as has the mass media's refusal to accept wrestling into the mainstream.

Ted Turner



Vince McMahon



WHO IS THE BEST REFEREE IN WRESTLING?

Dave Hebner	53%
Nick Patrick	35%
Dick Kroll.....	8%
Others	4%

No surprise here. Hebner works every major WWF match and has become the most respected and trusted arbiter in wrestling. Danny Davis received several votes, which came as a bit of a surprise. Wasn't it just a few years ago that Davis was the rulebreaker referee-turned-wrestler? Nick Patrick is not only WCW's head referee, he's its best referee.

WHO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MAN IN WRESTLING?

Vince McMahon	83%
Hulk Hogan	7%
Ted Turner.....	7%
Others	3%

This overwhelming support for the WWF head is sure to inflate his already huge ego. But there's no doubt McMahon has had incredible influence on the sport. He changed its entire look nearly a decade ago, when he broke down territorial barriers, and made "pay-per-view" the most important phrase in wrestling terminology. Of course, McMahon built his empire around Hogan, who insiders say gets what he wants when he wants it in the WWF. As for Turner, he apparently hasn't wielded enough power in his position as owner of WCW.

VAN HAMMER

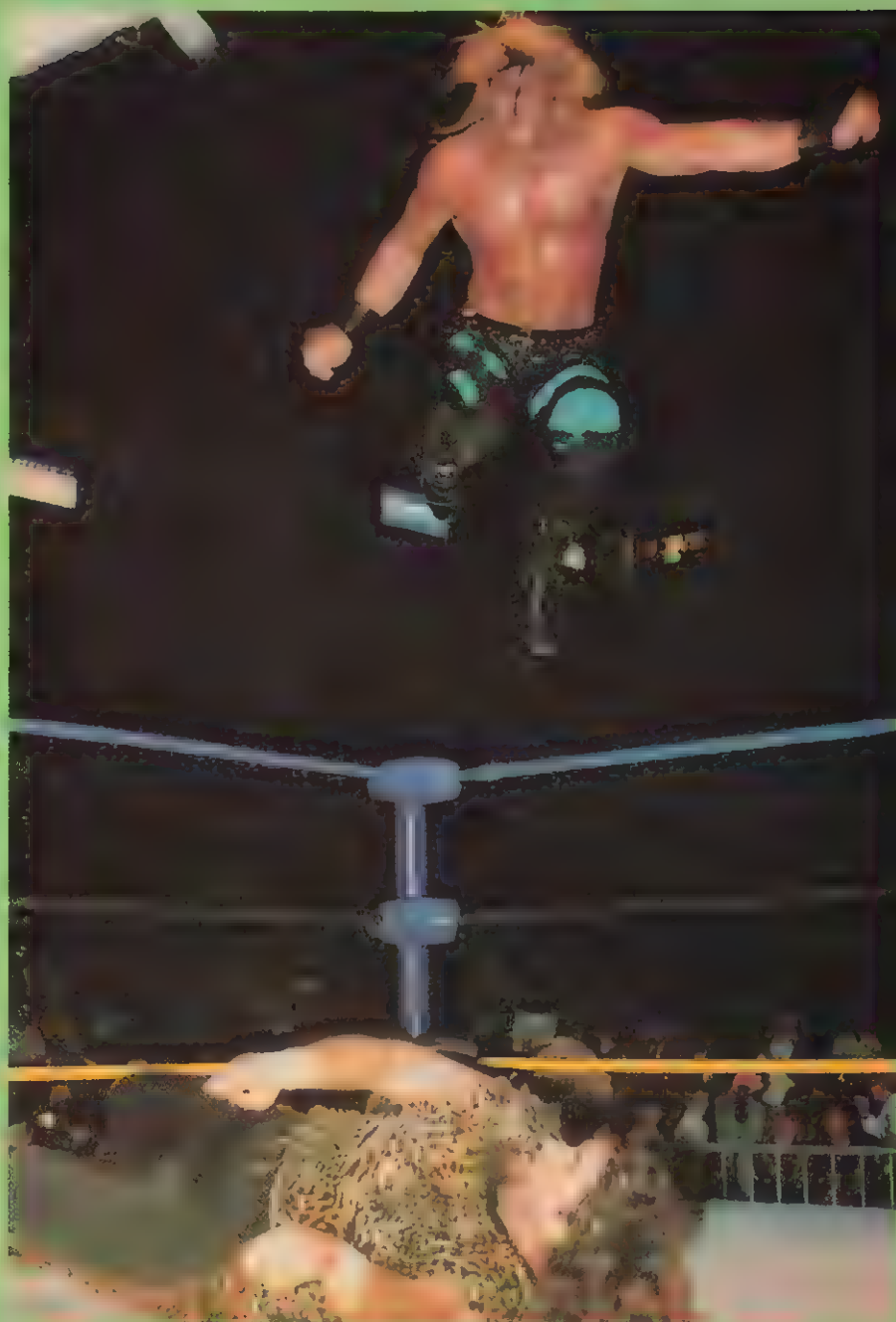
(Continued from page 49)

ting. He has extensive working knowledge of the sweet science and is capable of brawling with the roughest men in the game.

"All Hammer has is his enthusiasm, a slingshot suplex, and the fans," a WCW fan favorite said. "You're not going to win too many titles with a slingshot suplex. In my book, Hammer comes up way short, at least for now."

That's the critical point. Maybe Hammer won't beat Windham, but he should learn from him. These matches should make Hammer a better wrestler and prepare him for future championship conquests.

If Hammer makes a mistake, Windham will turn it into a pin. Hammer has never wrestled any-



Jack knows just how dangerous Hammer can be. So does Windham. If the NWA champion disregards Hammer's threat, he may not be champion for much longer.

one like that. If Hammer isn't at his best on a given night, he'll lose early.

"The Hammerheads will help him, but there comes a point in match when the fans are no factor," Sting said. "Hammer has to build up his repertoire while trying not to embarrass himself. I think he'll do fine."

Everybody agrees, but no-

body—except Hammer—thinks he can win the NWA title. Hammer doesn't care.

"Upsets are what sports is all about," Hammer said. "Yeah, I know it would be an upset if I won, but you know what the best part is? Nobody would be upset if I won the title."

Nobody except Barry Windham, of course. ☐

MOVING?

Kindly give us 8 weeks advance notice

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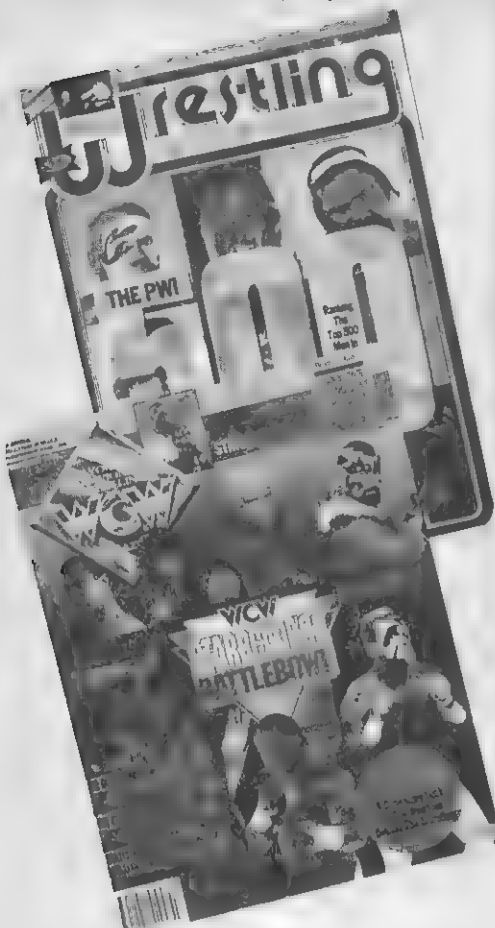
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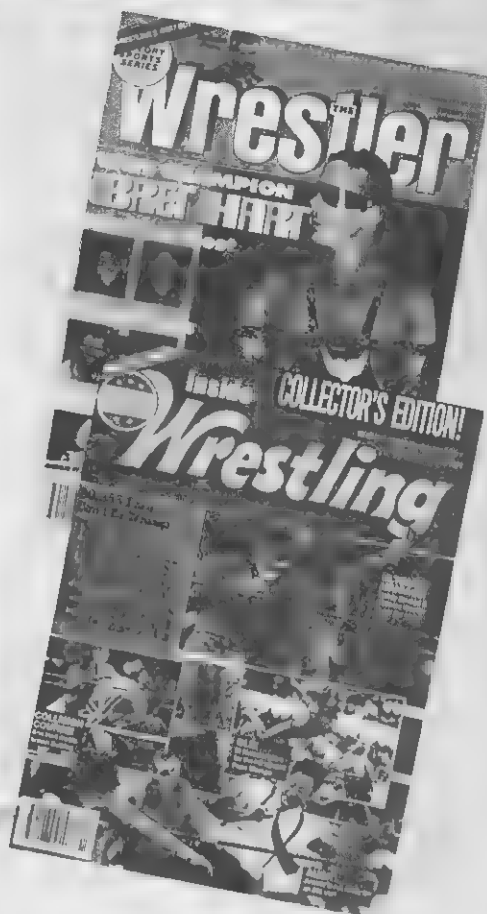
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PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 27)



Missy was excited when Sting arrived at Clash of the Champions XX on his Harley. She is equally excited about her status as "First Lady of WCW," confident she has succeeded in the male-dominated world of pro wrestling.

APTER: Don't bother.

ROSENBAUM: Missy, I was just wondering. Where you do buy your clothes?

HYATT: Why, only in the finest shops,



In her role as commentator, Hyatt doesn't shy from controversy, she seeks it out.

Dave, but I don't think it would be fair to say where I buy my clothes or who does my hair or who does my nails. They're my own little secrets.

PETERS: I think we'd better get this interview back on track. Let's get back to Ric Flair.

HYATT: I don't see what the big fuss is all about. I just want to talk to Ric in confidence, but for some reason he won't talk to me. He keeps sending his big, burly bodyguards after me. I'm just doing my job!

APTER: Is that all? Don't you want to manage Flair?

HYATT: Maybe, maybe not. Under the right terms, I'd manage almost anybody.

ROSENBAUM: Anybody?

HYATT: Well, not anybody. But everybody knows that Ric Flair is a seven-time NWA and WCW World champi-

on and one of the greatest wrestlers in the world. I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't try to find out when he plans to return to the ring, and I'd just be cheating myself if I didn't explore the possibilities.

PETERS: But there could be something else, couldn't there?

HYATT: I have no idea what you mean.

ROSENBAUM: I think he wants to know if you're hot for Flair's body.

PETERS: Very tactful, Rosenbaum.

HYATT: No, I am not hot for Ric Flair's body, but I appreciate that he is one of the greatest athletes this sport has ever seen. And he's got a great personality.

APTER: He has a huge ego!

ROSENBAUM: So did all of her other men. Then she brings them down to size.



Whether as a manager, commentator, valet, or even wrestler, Missy remains one of the most popular personalities in WCW, as these autograph seekers would attest.

HYATT: Am I being interviewed here or are you boys just gonna argue amongst yourselves? I'll leave if you want me to.

PETERS (loudly): No! No! Don't leave! We want to ask you about your column in *WCW Magazine*.

HYATT: Why, you're the editor, Craig!

ROSENBAUM: He knows that, but I guess he wants to know where you come up with the ideas for your column.

HYATT: I just take whatever pops into my head and write it down on paper.

PETERS: That's what I thought. Have you ever read Larry King's column in *USA Today*?

HYATT: You should know that, Craig. I said it was required reading in one of my columns.

PETERS: Oh, that's right. Now I remember. I almost fell off my seat when I read it.

APTER: Do you think Larry King is imitating you?

HYATT: We both have our own styles.

ROSENBAUM: Excuse me? Did I just hear you say, "We both have our own styles"?

HYATT: That's right.

ROSENBAUM: Unbelievable.

HYATT: Why, thank you very much.

APTER: Did you really write, "It's

only a man's world for men?"

PETERS: Yes, she did.

HYATT: Yes, I did, and I think it makes perfect sense. Men think they run the show, but women like me have every right to our place in this world. If you ask me, Ric Flair thinks women are his personal play things, but he doesn't realize what a woman can do for his career. The right woman could keep him going.

ROSENBAUM: And are you the right woman?

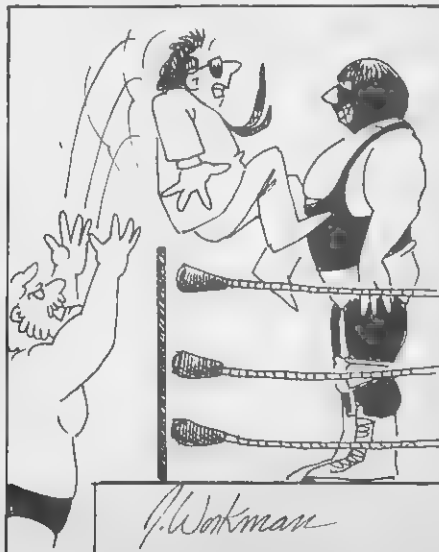
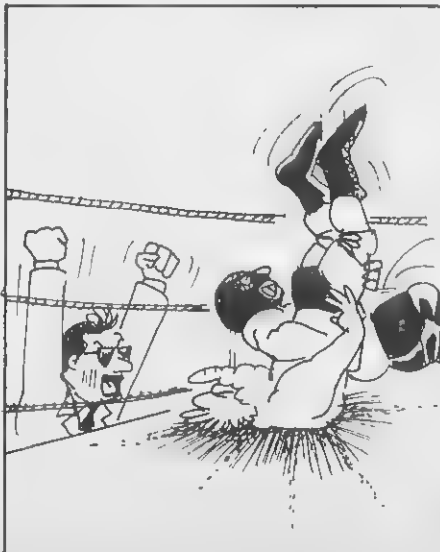
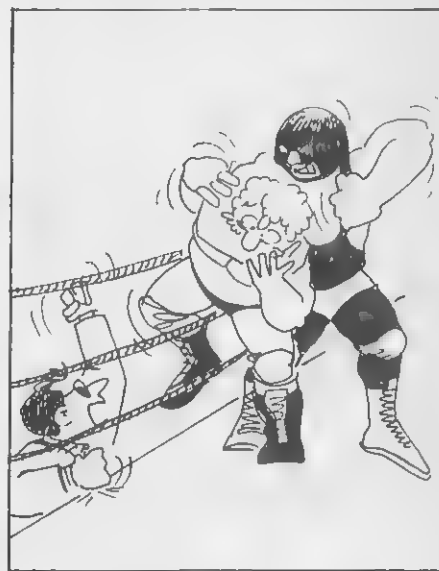
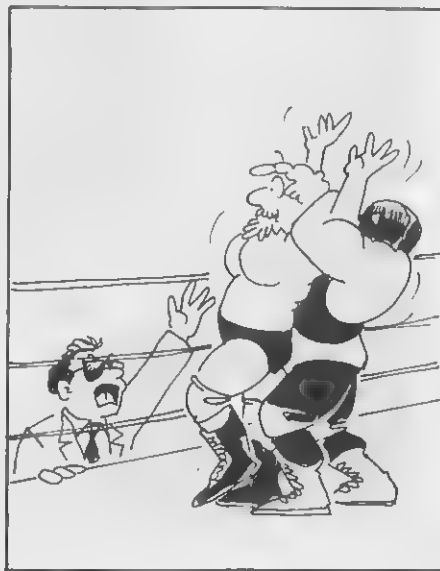
HYATT: I'm the right woman for only the right man.

APTER: On that note ...

PETERS: Good idea, Bill. Thank you for your time, Missy.

HYATT: Is that all? Well, you're very welcome. Now have a good day.

ROSENBAUM: Oops, there goes my pen again ... □



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RINGSIDE

(Continued from page 11)



Arn Anderson slams Tom Prichard. "Double A" started off in Smoky Mountain by targeting his wrath at Bobby Eaton. Now he's after the rest of The Heavenly Bodies, including Prichard.

Stan Lane. After R 'n' R **Robert Gibson** pinned Prichard to win the match, pandemonium broke loose as all three teams battled with tables, chairs, ropes, chains, and even a tire.

Most importantly, Lane and Prichard are now fully involved in Eaton's feud with Anderson.

"This is just what we didn't need," Prichard said. "But I guess there's no choice now. Anderson challenged The Heavenly Bodies and now he'll have to pay for his mistake."

Steve Doll and **Rex King** aren't making any friends in the USWA.

The rulebreakers won the tag team title to **The Moondogs** on April 12 in Memphis, Tennessee. King tripped **Spot** from outside the ring and held Spot's foot while Doll scored the pin.

Later in the card, **The Moondogs**, **Jeff Jarrett**, **Jerry Lawler**, and **Richard Lee** wrestled **The Harlem Knights**, **Scotty Flamingo**, **Mike Samples**, and **Brian Christopher** in a 10-man match. In a shocking incident, Doll and King rubbed ether onto a towel and smeared it in Jarrett's face. Jarrett fell to the mat and Christopher made the pin.



Those who believed they had seen the last of Paul E. Dangerously when he departed WCW were not pleased to see him in ECW, where he has managed Don Muraco to the heavyweight title.

"I don't know what's come over them," Lawler said. "But there's no call for what they did. Competition is one thing, but those nuts could've killed Jeff."

Paul E. Dangerously is making his presence felt in ECW. During **Don Muraco's** match against ECW champion **Mr. Sandman**, the "Psycho Yuppie" blasted Sandman with his cellular phone, allowing Muraco to make the pin and win the championship. Dangerously is also managing the tag team of "**Superfly**" **Jimmy**

Snuka and **Eddie Gilbert**, two wily veterans whose skill, ring smarts, and propensity for violence make them very tough to beat.

"This is a new era of **The Dangerous Alliance**," Dangerously said. "Best of all, I've got call waiting on my cellular."

Dr. Tom Miller, a longtime ring announcer in Greensboro, North Carolina, died on March 24 after a lengthy illness. Miller, 59, worked hundreds of cards for **Jim Crockett Promotions**. ☐

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BETWEEN FALLS

(Continued from page 9)



Although he liked the Tatanka-Shawn Michaels bout, reader Richard Evans was disgusted overall with
WrestleMania IX because of what he perceived as preferential treatment given to Hulk Hogan.

You would think Hogan
would've gotten the message that
he was no longer needed, but
he's come back to haunt us with
the WWF title in hand again. I just
want to say that I hope the shortest
title match in history leads to a
shorter title reign.

DAVID S. MACKEY

Marietta, GA

WrestleMania IX was the great-
est WrestleMania ever—until the fi-
nal five minutes. The ancient Ro-
man theme was unique and visual-
ly appealing. The quality of the
individual matches was superb.
The Tatanka-Shawn Michaels bout
has to be a candidate for your
Match of the Year. Little did we
unsuspecting souls realize we
would witness the coronation ball
of Hulk Hogan, Vince McMahon's
greatest box office draw. The
event degenerated into an obvi-
ous, adulterated ploy to reestablish
Hogan as WWF world champion.

So much was made of the con-
tract signing between Bret Hart
and Yokozuna. When did
Yokozuna and Hogan sign for a ti-
tle match? Since when can a man-

ager (Mr. Fuji) grant title matches?
Isn't that the domain of the federa-
tion's championship committee?
Why wasn't Jack Tunney seated at
ringside for this major event?

Hogan is now a five-time WWF
World champion by virtue of win-
ning an unsanctioned title bout.
Tunney should declare the title va-
cant and schedule a rematch be-
tween Hart and Yokozuna, with
Fuji banned from ringside. Until
this fiasco is addressed, I have
bought my last WWF pay-per-view
event.

RICHARD EVANS
Gulfport, MS

SMALL CONSOLATION

I was watching the WWF on
television and I saw a match in-
volving midgets! The Bushwhack-
ers and Tiger Jackson took on The
Beverly Brothers and Little Louie.
Boy, was that funny. Even my fa-
ther, who is not interested in wres-
tling, laughed. I think if the WWF
has more matches involving midg-
ets, they will pick up more fans.

DUSTIN DEDRICKSON
Forest Grove, OR □

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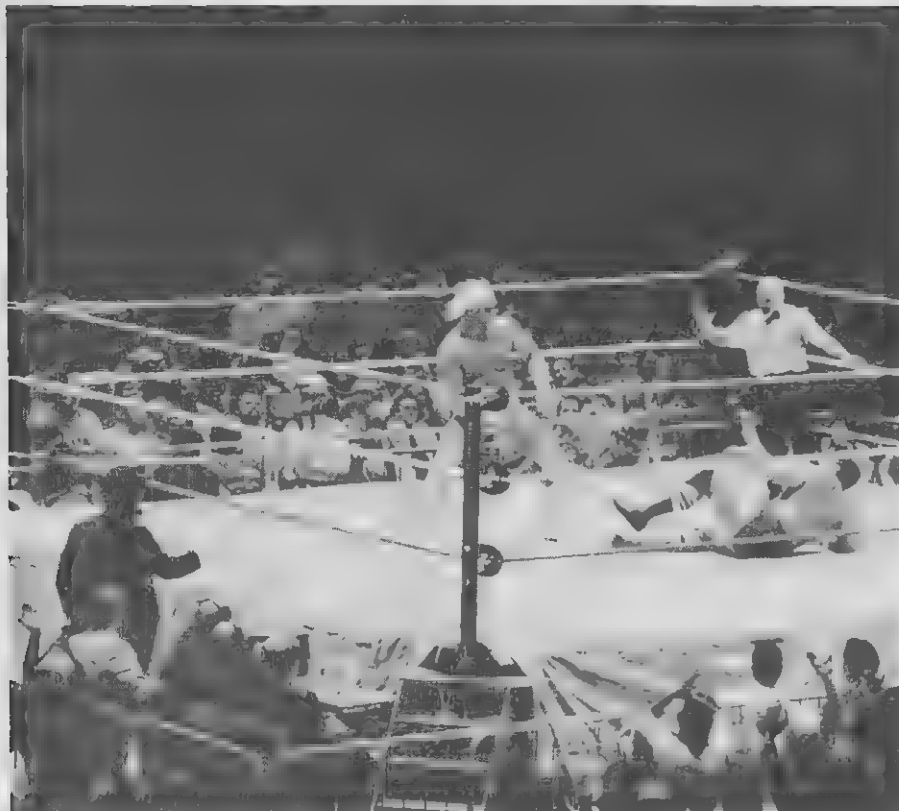
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WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

(Continued from page 12)



In 1985, Fuji managed Don Muraco to title shots against Hogan. Eight years later, Fuji achieved his goal, but two minutes after Yokozuna had won, Fuji was again left without a champion.

managed Don Muraco. At that time, the "Magnificent One" was wrestling at the peak of his abilities. Just a few years earlier, under the management of Capt. Lou Albano, Muraco had captured the Intercontinental title. Under Fuji, he was ready for a greater prize.

Fuji quickly secured for his charge matches against Hogan, who was then in the midst of his first World title reign. Three consecutive cards at Madison Square Garden featured Hogan vs. Muraco as the main event. At the end of the third, Hogan was still World champion, and Muraco would never again come that close to winning the championship.

Fuji has claimed that Muraco was set up from the beginning, that a variety of forces conspired to deny him a fair shot.

"Before Muraco even stepped through the ropes," said one source, "Fuji had decided to employ an all-or-nothing strategy. That is, he wanted Muraco to take

Hogan on at his best as well as his worst. He didn't help Muraco exploit Hogan's weaknesses, and that is his job as a manager."

This example of past mismanagement serves only to highlight Fuji's current blunder with Yokozuna. The Samoan with a love of things Japanese was touted by dozens of experts as the next World champion.

Actually, Fuji did almost everything right up until the day Yokozuna won the belt. He picked Yokozuna's opponents skillfully, ensuring that his man would look good against opponents who weren't all that bad. He entered Yokozuna in the Royal Rumble, a bout that offered the prize of a title shot. He won, and later orchestrated an attack on Hart at the match signing in order to intimidate the champion.

By the day of WrestleMania, Fuji had convinced the sumo sadist not only that he would win, but that he would enjoy a long

and glorious reign. He convinced him by asking him to imagine how he would feel if all their preparation had been wasted.

That was good. That was what Fuji should have done. It was his ill-timed challenge to Hogan that places him in the bonehead hall of fame. Worse than that, it threatens to destroy his reputation, among his colleagues as well as the wrestlers and fans.

Bobby Heenan never would have made such a big mistake. Neither would Jimmy Hart. Those men would have gotten their champions out of the ring the moment they caught the sight of Hogan.

Fuji either let his confidence momentarily rob him of his reason, or actually believed Yokozuna could defeat two great athletes in one day. Whatever his motivation, he cost his man a lot of respect and even more dollars.

Despite the embarrassment, Fuji isn't planning on giving up, nor should he. He almost got Muraco to the top. He did get Yokozuna there, for two minutes and seven seconds.

Maybe next time he'll get it right.

This is my last "Win, Lose, Or Draw" as a full-time member of the London Publishing staff, though I will continue to contribute to *PWI* and its sister publications on a freelance basis. By the time you read this, I'll have said my final goodbyes to the people I have worked with for the last 6½ years. I thank them for their kindness, patience, and understanding.

I especially will miss the office humor. Most of it consists of inside jokes, but anyone would enjoy watching Bill Apter "wrestle" Johnny B. Badd for the "National Office Wrestling Championship" (complete with cardboard belt)!

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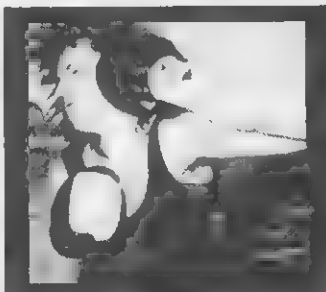
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FROM THE DESK OF

(Continued from page 6)



Last summer, Mil Mascaras met the editorial staff. From left: Ed Maloney, Andy Rodriguez, Chris Bernucca, Joe Tintle, Jeff Ryan, Stu Saks, Steve Farhood, Craig Peters, and Bobby Cassidy.

(see story on page 28) did not draw a capacity crowd, and that may be disappointing to some. But give it time.

This town is a WWF stronghold. Once word gets around that this federation offers everything the WWF can offer, with more of an emphasis on mat action and less on clown acts, the fans will be there.

But I'm not sure I will. I, along with several of my colleagues at *PWI*, will be saying goodbye to New York shortly. The company will have transferred its base of operations to Pennsylvania by the time this issue reaches your hands. As I sit in my Long Island office writing this column, I barely notice the empty shelves and the large sealed boxes around me. All I really see are the people, most of whom have chosen not to leave New York but who are still pounding away at their keyboards as if nothing unusual was happening.

It's a time of mixed feelings for me and everyone here. I'm excited about moving to another state for the first time in my 37 years, but, as I look at these people, I

can't help but be sad.

There's Andy Rodriguez, a quiet man with an incredible intellect, who, in all the years I've known him, has never said "I don't know" to any question I've posed, be it on wrestling, politics, or anything else ... There's Jeff Ryan, the most talented writer I've ever edited, whose work in the boxing field has landed him assignments with *Sports Illustrated*, *Inside Sports*, and *Sport* ... There's Chris Bernucca, a man who can't even drive but whose drive brought him from copy editor to managing editor in about a year ... There's Bobby Cassidy, whose desire to better himself has allowed him to make the difficult transition from scholastic sports star to sports writer in such an impressive fashion ... There's Ed Maloney, a newspaper man through and through, who was able to learn magazine publishing to the point where he can do everything we've needed him to do ... There's Joe Tintle, a man with an anecdote for every occasion and who can colorize a boxing story as well as Ted Turner can a movie ... There's Al Bello, a

brilliant young photographer, who, even during the most depressing times, can bring a smile to my face ... There's Charlie Foster, who must have churned out 5,000 layouts through the years, but who, approaching 60, still has the energy to be the starting first baseman for his softball team ... There's Frank Morano, a superb designer who plays his Walkman so loud, it can be heard throughout the entire art department ... There's Don Rodrigues, whose imaginative artwork appears on the pages of *WCW Magazine* each month.

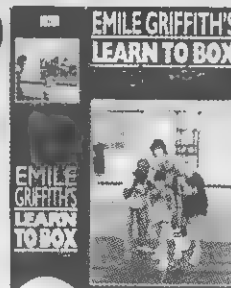
I can go on and on, but let me summarize by saying I'll miss them all terribly. The women in the front office: Natalie Carollo, Jackie Callaghan, Donna Cricchio, Eileen Dunham, and Dina Meekins. They've done nothing but brighten my days and make my job easier (or at least bearable). I've already offered my tribute to my former boss, Stanley Weston. I'd just like to thank him for the faith he's shown me through the years, and for providing me with the income to pay for the house that I now have to sell.

I've already said my goodbyes to Art Director Ken Morgan, Photo Editor Roy London, and Managing Editor Bob Smith. It hurts that they won't be here for what is sure to be a tearful farewell party.

It's my second day working on this column, and it's raining. I cannot see Manhattan outside the window. In the mood I'm in, I think it's better that way. I'll leave it all to WCW and—ahem—Tony Anthony. Give my regards to Broadway.

A personal note to all those who wrote me with Hall of Fame suggestions: It's been a bit crazy here, as you could well imagine. I haven't had time to go through my mail yet. Please bear with me a while longer. ☐

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ARENA REPORTS



champion **Big Van Vader** beat **Sting** by disqualification when **Sting** used a belt tossed into the ring by **Harley Race**, who was suspended in a cage 20 feet above the ring ... World tag team champions **Brian Pillman & Steve Austin** battled to a 45-minute draw with **Shane Douglas & Rick Steamboat**. (03-28-93)

—Mike Bogni

Tony Anthony in a chain match to win the heavyweight title ... In a nine-man tag team match involving three teams in a "street fight elimination," **Tom Prichard, Stan Lane, & Bobby Eaton** beat **Arm Anderson, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, & The Stud Stable** with **Prichard** pinning **Gibson** for the final pin. (04-02-93)

—Timothy A. Walker

FLORIDA

TAMPA—ICWA at the Sportatorium: **The Lord of Discipline** pinned **Mark "Snap" Mercedes** ... **G. Nice** defeated **Mr. Mickey Jay** to win the TV title ... **Jumbo Baretta** wrestled **The Cuban Assassin** to a double-countout ... Tag team champions **The Southern Posse** defeated **Big Bill Tyree & Mr. Electricity** when **Sonny T** pinned **Electricity** ... **Coconut Savage** defeated **WING** junior heavyweight champion **Jim Backlund** by countout. (04-08-93)

—Shannon Rose

TAMPA—ICWA at the Sportatorium: **Big Bill Tyree** drew with **Jeff Bradley** ... **G. Nice** beat **Jumbo Baretta** by disqualification ... **WING** light heavyweight champion **Jim Backlund** defeated **Raul Mata** by countout ... **Frankie Rose** beat **The Cuban Assassin** to win the heavyweight title ... Tag team champions **The Southern Posse** defeated **New Blood** when **Big Sonny T** pinned **Dr. Buck Quartermain**. (04-01-93)

—Shannon Rose

GEORGIA

ATLANTA—WCW at The Omni: **2 Cold Scorpio** beat **Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker** ... **Erik Watts** defeated **Tex Stazenger** ... **Maxx Payne** defeated **Johnny Gunn** ... **Ron Simmons** beat **Shanghai Pierce** ... **NWA** champion **Barry Windham & Paul Orndorff** beat **Cactus Jack & The Barbarian** when **Windham** pinned **Barbarian** ... World

KANSAS

MANHATTAN—WCW at Bramledge Coliseum: **Joey Maggs** pinned **The Russian Brute** ... **Maxx Payne** pinned **Johnny Gunn** ... **The Barbarian** pinned **Rage** ... **Van Hammer** pinned **Vinnie Vegas** ... **Cactus Jack & 2 Cold Scorpio** defeated **Big Van Vader & Paul Orndorff** when **Jack** pinned **Orndorff** ... World tag team champions **Steve Austin & Brian Pillman** defeated **Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas**. (04-09-93)

—David Faber

WICHITA—WWF at the Coliseum: **Curt Hennig & World champion Bret Hart** beat **Lex Luger & Razor Ramon** ... **Randy Savage** beat **Giant Gonzales** by disqualification ... **Crush** beat **Skinner** ... **Skinner** beat **Koko B. Ware** ... **Typhoon** beat **Repo Man** ... **Tito Santana** beat **Terry Taylor** ... **The Nasty Boys** battled **The Headshrinkers** to a double-disqualification. (03-24-93)

—Larry Smith

KENTUCKY

PIKEVILLE—Smoky Mountain Wrestling's "Bluegrass Brawl" at the college gym: **Robbie Eagle** pinned **Rip Rogers** ... **The Mongolian Stomper** defeated **Rob Morgan** with a sleeperhold ... **The Nightstalker** was disqualified for throwing **Tim Homer** over the top rope ... In a "Singapore spike" match, **Brian Lee** pinned **Kevin Sullivan** ... **Tracey Smothers** beat **"Dirty White Boy"**

LOUISIANA

NEW ORLEANS—WCW at the Municipal Auditorium: **Maxx Payne** defeated **Johnny Gunn** ... **2 Cold Scorpio & Marcus Alexander Bagwell** beat **Shanghai Pierce & Tex Stazenger** when **Scorpio** pinned **Stazenger** ... **Ron Simmons** pinned **Steven Dane** ... **Van Hammer** defeated **Vinnie Vegas** ... World tag team champions **Steve Austin & Brian Pillman** beat **Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas** when **Austin** pinned **Douglas** ... **Sting** won a 10-man battle royal when he eliminated **Shanghai Pierce**. (03-31-93)

—Jay Stein

MISSOURI

KANSAS CITY—WCW at the Municipal Auditorium: **Joey Maggs** pinned **The Russian Brute** ... **Maxx Payne** pinned **Johnny Gunn** ... **2 Cold Scorpio & Marcus Alexander Bagwell** defeated **The Wrecking Crew** ... **Van Hammer** pinned **Vinnie Vegas** ... In a non-title match, **Cactus Jack** pinned TV champion **Paul Orndorff** ... World champion **Big Van Vader** defeated **Sting** by disqualification ... In a non-title match, **Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas** defeated World tag team champions **Steve Austin & Brian Pillman**. (04-10-93)

—David Faber

NEVADA

LAS VEGAS—WWF **Wrestlemania IX** at **Caesars Palace**: **Tito Santana**

This special feature is for all fans who want to know who won and who lost . . . and how. In it, we present results from a full month of action across the nation and around the world, culled from the pages of the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly* newsletter; readers of *PWI Weekly* received these results just days after the cards took place. If you would like to join professional wrestling's largest network of correspondents, write to: "Arena Report" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, Box 956, Ft. Washington, PA 19034.

pinned **Papa Shango** . . . **Tatanka** beat Intercontinental champion **Shawn Michaels** by disqualification . . . **Rick & Scott Steiner** beat **The Headshrinkers** when **Scott** pinned **Samu** after a "Frankensteiner" . . . **Doink the Clown** pinned **Crush** after an impostor **Doink** assisted him while the referee was unconscious . . . **Razor Ramon** pinned **Bob Backlund** . . . World tag team champions **Money Inc.** beat **Hulk Hogan & Brutus Beefcake** by disqualification . . . **Lex Luger** pinned **Curt Hennig** while **Hennig's** feet were on the ropes . . . **The Undertaker** beat **Giant Gonzales** by disqualification . . . **Yokozuna** won the World championship from **Bret Hart**. After the match, **Mr. Fuji** and **Yokozuna** issued a challenge to **Hulk Hogan**. The "Hulkster" accepted, pinned **Yokozuna**, and was awarded the belt.
(04-04-93)

—Kenneth Alyard

NEW YORK

NEW YORK—*WWF Monday Night Raw* at the Manhattan Center: **Bam Bam Bigelow** pinned **Virgil** . . . **Damian Demento** pinned **Jim Brunzell** . . . **Jim Powers** beat **L.A. Gore** . . . **The Bushwhackers** defeated **Damian Demento & Repo Man** when **Butch Miller** pinned **Repo** . . . **Tatanka** pinned **Reno Riggins** . . . **Doink the Clown** beat **Kamala** by countout . . . **Rick & Scott Steiner** beat **The Beverly Brothers** . . . **Giant Gonzales** pinned **Kamala** . . . **Jerry Lawler** defeated **Jim Powers** . . . **Tatanka** battled **Bam Bam Bigelow** to a double-countout.
(03-22-93)

—Al Bello

NORTH CAROLINA

TAYLORSVILLE—PWF at the National Guard Armory: **Cruel Connection II** won an eight-man bunkhouse stampepe, ousting "Gorgeous" **George**

South . . . Heavyweight champion **Italian Stallion** pinned **Outlaw** . . . Junior heavyweight champion "Gorgeous" **George South** pinned **Flaming Youth** . . . **Cruel Connection II** defeated **Mad Dog** . . . Tag team champions **The Russian Assassins** beat **Star Ryder & The Southern Rocker**.
(04-10-93)

—Fred Abstock

CHARLOTTE—WCW at the Coliseum: **2 Cold Scorpio** defeated **Joey Maggs** . . . **Maxx Payne** beat **Johnny Gunn** . . . **The Barbarian** defeated **Rage of The Wrecking Crew** . . . **Van Hammer** beat **Vinnie Vegas** . . . **Arn Anderson** defeated **Erik Watts** . . . **Rick Rude** beat **Tom Zenk** . . . **Cactus Jack** wrestled **Paul Orndorff** to a double-countout . . . World champion **Big Van Vader** beat **Sting** by disqualification . . . World tag team champions **Brian Pillman & Steve Austin** defeated **Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas**.
(04-03-93)

—Henry Moore

KINGS MOUNTAIN—PWF at the Armory: Heavyweight champion **The Italian Stallion** beat **Austin Steele** . . . Junior heavyweight champion **George South** pinned **The Southern Rocker** . . . **The Russian Assassins** won the PWF tag team belts from **Star Ryder & Flaming Youth** . . . **The Black Scorpion** defeated **American G.I.** . . . **Cruel Connection II** beat **Scotty McKeever**.
(03-19-93)

—Mark Stemple

OHIO

RICHFIELD—WWF at the Coliseum: "Brooklyn Brawler" **Steve Lombardi** pinned **Jim Powers** . . . The scheduled match between **Tatanka** against **Doink the Clown** was postponed when **Doink** attacked **Tatanka** before the bell . . . **Bam Bam Bigelow** beat **Kamala** by countout when **Kim Chee** attacked **Kamala** at ringside and **Kamala** chased him back to the dressing room . . . **Bob Backlund** pinned **Damian Demento** . . .

Rick & Scott Steiner beat **The Beverly Brothers** when **Scott** pinned **Blake** after a "Frankensteiner" . . . **Tatanka** beat **Doink** by disqualification when **Doink** sprayed a foreign substance in **Tatanka's** eyes . . . **Virgil** pinned **Reno Riggins** . . . World champion **Bret Hart & Curt Hennig** beat **Razor Ramon & Lex Luger**.
(03-25-93)

—Jeff Gorman

OREGON

PORTLAND—Championship Wrestling USA at the Sports Arena: **Max Steele** pinned **Dane Rush** . . . **John Rambo** pinned **Jim Pope** . . . **C.W. Bergstrom** pinned **Bruiser Brian** . . . **Bobby Blair** battled **Nick Danger** to a time-limit draw . . . **Lou Andrews** pinned **Jim Pope** . . . **Bart Sawyer** defeated **Col. DeBeers** by disqualification . . . **C.W. Bergstrom & Max Steele** defeated International tag team champions **Ryuma Go & Jesse Barr** by disqualification.
(04-10-93)

—Kenn Jones

PORTLAND—Championship Wrestling USA at the Sports Arena: **Bobby Blair** beat **Sumito** by disqualification . . . **Nick Danger** fought to a draw with **John Rambo** . . . **C.W. Bergstrom** defeated **Lou Andrews** . . . **Carl Polk** defeated **Al Madril** . . . **Col. DeBeers** fought **Bart Sawyer** to a double-disqualification . . . **The Samoan Nightmares & Max Steele** beat **Dane Rush, Jesse Barr, & Bruiser Brian**.
(04-03-93)

—Kenn Jones

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA—WWF at the Spectrum: "Brooklyn Brawler" **Steve Lombardi** beat **Jim Powers** . . . **Bam Bam Bigelow** beat **Kamala** . . . **Bob Backlund** defeated **Damian Demento** . . . **The Undertaker** beat **Yokozuna** by disqualification . . . **Tatanka** defeated **Doink the Clown** by disqualification . . . **Virgil** pinned **Reno Riggins** . . . **Rick & Scott Steiner** beat **The Beverly Brothers**.
(03-27-93)

—Richard Kreholer

TENNESSEE

MEMPHIS—USWA at Mid-South Coliseum: **Jeff Gaylord** pinned **The Rock 'n' Roll Phantom** . . . Middleweight champion **Dan Davis** pinned **Master of Terror** . . . **Miss Texas** defeated **J.C. Ice** by disqualification when **Wolfie D** interfered . . . **Koko B. Ware** beat **Wolfie D** by disqualification when **J.C. Ice** interfered . . . Tag team champions **The Moondogs** defeated **The Harlem Knights** by disqualification when **Brian**

Christopher and **Scotty Flamingo** interfered ... Southern champion **Jeff Jarrett** defeated **Brian Christopher** by disqualification when Christopher began hitting Jarrett with a chain ... Heavyweight champion **Jerry Lawler** defeated **Scotty Flamingo** by disqualification when **Brian Christopher** interfered. (04-05-93)

—Mark Mitchell

MORRISTOWN—Smoky Mountain Wrestling at East High School: **Jimmy Golden** pinned **Mike Samson** ... **The Nightstalker** pinned **Joe Cazana** ... **Brian Lee** pinned **Kevin Sullivan** ... SMW champion **Tracey Smothers** beat "Dirty White Boy" **Tony Anthony** ... In a six-man tag team barbed wire cage match, **Ricky Morton**, **Tim Horner**, & **The Mongolian Stomper** beat **Stan Lane**, **Tom Prichard**, & **Bobby Eaton** by disqualification. (04-03-93)

—Bill Needham

MEMPHIS—USWA at Mid-South Coliseum: **Lauren Davenport** beat **Miss Texas** ... **The Rock 'n' Roll Phantom** defeated **Tony Williams** ... **Dan Davis** & **Frank Morell** beat **PG-13** when **Morell** pinned **Wolfie D**; **Miss Texas** was special referee ... **The Moondogs** defeated **Brian Christopher** & **Scotty Flamingo** to regain the tag team title when **Spot** pinned **Christopher** ... **The Harlem Knights** beat **Jerry Lawler** & **Big Bossman** by disqualification when **Lawler** threw fire at **Nelson Knight** ... WWF Intercontinental champion **Shawn Michaels** pinned **Jeff Jarrett** after interference from **Brian Christopher**. (03-29-93)

—Mark Mitchell

KNOXVILLE—Smoky Mountain at the Civic Coliseum: **Chris Candido** pinned **Robbie Eagle** ... **Tim Horner** beat **The Nightstalker** by disqualification ... **Kevin Sullivan** pinned "Prime Time" **Brian Lee** in a no-time-limit "Singapore spike" match ... "Dirty White Boy" **Tony Anthony** defeated **Tracey Smothers** ... **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** & **Arn Anderson** beat **The Heavenly Bodies**—**Tom Prichard**, **Bobby Eaton**, & **Stan Lane**—when **Morton** pinned **Prichard** after **Eaton** hit **Prichard** with **Jim Corrette's** tennis racket by mistake. (03-21-93)

—Bill Needham

TEXAS

MESQUITE—United Wrestling Alliance at the Villa Inn: **Lady Kay** beat **Lady DI** by disqualification ... **Bullman Downs** & **Alex Porteau** defeated **Bam Bam Richards** & **Johnny Dollar** when **Downs** pinned **Dollar** after a bulldog headlock ... **Jimmy James** & **Ebony**

Prince defeated **Texas Animal** & **Ray Evans** when **James** pinned **Animal** after using a foreign object ... **Action Jackson** beat **Awesome Kong** by disqualification ... **Scott Braddock** pinned **John Hawk**. (04-07-93)

—Kevin Boswell

DALLAS—Big D Championship Wrestling at the Rocket Palace: **Jimmy James** pinned **The Masked Cat** ... Light heavyweight champion **Big D** beat **The Texas Animal** ... **Terry Simms** defeated **Bill Irwin** by disqualification ... **Gary Young** & **Rod Price** wrestled **John Hawk** & **Bobby Duncum Jr.** to a double-countout ... **Iceman Parsons** & **Action Jackson** beat **Shawn Stevens** & **Sweet Daddy Falcone** by disqualification ... **Scotty Braddock** beat **Chris Adams**. (04-04-93)

—David Gebnite

DALLAS—Global Wrestling Federation at the Sportatorium (benefit card for **Hollie** and **Lacey**, the daughters of the late **Kerry Von Erich**): **Bubba Fangman** pinned **Ed Robinson** with a rollup ... **Alex Porteau** pinned **Calvin Knapp** ... **Scott Putski** beat **Rod Price** when **Price** was disqualified for tossing **Putski** over the top rope ... **Booker T.** beat **Francis Buxton** by countout ... **Shaun** & **Scott Simpson** beat **Awsome** & **King Kong** ... **Terry Simms** beat **Killer Brooks** by disqualification ... **John Hawk** & **Bobby Duncum Jr.** defeated **Iceman Parsons** & **Action Jackson** ... **Mike Davis** beat **Black Bart** by countout ... **The Ebony Experience** defeated **Sid Justice** & **Johnny Rotten** when **Stevie Ray** pinned **Rotten** ... **Kevin Von Erich** & **Chris Adams** beat **Buddy Roberts** & **Michael Hayes** when **Kevin** pinned **Roberts** while applying the clawhold. (04-02-93)

—Freddie Fargo

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK—WCW at Scope: **2 Cold Scorpio** beat **Doug Gibson** ... **Maxx Payne** defeated **Johnny Gunn** ... **Van Hammer** beat **Vinnie Vegas** ... **Cactus Jack** & **The Barbarian** beat **The Wrecking Crew** when **Cactus** pinned **Rage** ... TV champion **Paul Orndorff** defeated **Tom Zenk** ... World champion **Big Van Vader** beat **Sting** by disqualification ... World tag team champions **Brian Pillman** & **Steve Austin** beat **Shane Douglas** & **Rick Steamboat** when **Austin** pinned **Douglas**. (04-01-93)

—Eddie Cheslock

ROANOKE—WCW at the Coliseum: **Marcus Alexander Bagwell** beat **Joey Maggs** ... **Brad Armstrong** beat **Doug**

Gibson ... **The Wrecking Crew** beat **Johnny Gunn** & **Tom Zenk** when **Fury** pinned **Gunn** ... **Ron Simmons** pinned **Shanghai Pierce** ... World tag team champions **Brian Pillman** & **Steve Austin** beat **Rick Steamboat** & **Shane Douglas** when **Austin** pinned **Douglas** ... **Sting** won an 11-man battle royal. (03-26-93)

—R.B. Smith

PINE GROVE—PWF at the high school: **Flaming Youth** won a 10-man battle royal, ousting **Cruel Connection II** ... Heavyweight champion **Italian Stallion** beat **Russian Assassin** in a Russian chain match ... Junior heavyweight champion **George South** pinned **The Southern Rocker** ... **Scotty McKeever** pinned **Mad Dog** ... **Flaming Youth** beat **Gladiator II**. (03-25-93)

—George Brock

HAYS—Smoky Mountain Wrestling at the high school: **Tasmaniac** beat **Robbie Eagle** ... **Rock 'n' Roll Express** defeated **Mike Samson** & **The Avenger** ... TV champion **Bobby Eaton** beat **Jimmy Golden** ... **Brian Lee** & **Tim Horner** beat **Kevin Sullivan** & **The Nightstalker** ... **Tom Prichard** battled TV champion **Bobby Eaton** to a no-contest ... **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** beat SMW tag team champions **The Heavenly Bodies** in a non-title match when **Robert Gibson** pinned **Stan Lane** ... TV champion **Bobby Eaton** pinned **Robbie Eagle** ... **Roger Anderson** beat **Kevin Sullivan** by disqualification ... Heavyweight champion **Tony Anthony** beat **Mike Samson** ... **Robert Fuller** & **Jimmy Golden** battled **The Heavenly Bodies** to a double-disqualification ... **Tracey Smothers** pinned heavyweight champion **Tony Anthony** in a non-title match. (03-22-93)

—Eugene Mackson

WEST VIRGINIA

GILBERT—Professional Wrestling Federation at the Firehouse: **Cruel Connection II** won an eight-man battle royal, eliminating **The Russian Assassin** ... PWF champion **The Italian Stallion** beat **Austin Steele** ... Junior heavyweight champion **George South** defeated **The Southern Rocker** ... **Cruel Connection II** & **Flaming Youth** beat **Black Scorpion** & **Killdozer**. (04-02-93)

—Stan Weinberg

CHARLESTON—WCW at the Civic Center: **Brad Armstrong** wrestled **Marcus Alexander Bagwell** to a time-limit draw ... **The Wrecking Crew** beat **Tom Zenk** & **Johnny Gunn** ... **Ron Simmons** defeated **Shanghai Pierce**

... World tag team champions **Brian Pillman & Steve Austin** beat **Rick Steamboat & Shane Douglas** ... Sting won an 11-man battle royal.
(03-27-93)

—Phil Nicholas

WISCONSIN

WAUPACA—Nu-Age Pro Wrestling at Expo Hall: **Jim Brunzell** pinned **The Cobra** to win the light heavyweight title ... Heavyweight champion **Tony the Annihilator** battled **The Texas Hangman** to a no-contest ... **Pvt. Moondog** defeated **Conan the Dark Rider** by disqualification ... **Stephanie Starr** pinned **Lori Lee Leather** ... In a handicap match, **Dr. Fitness** defeated **Mr. Security**, **Time Bomb**, & **Tommy Gun** ... **Captain Lee** pinned **Terry the Terminator**.
(04-09-93)

—Jeff Sharkey



INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

TORONTO, ONTARIO—WWF matinee at Maple Leaf Gardens: "**Brooklyn Brawler**" **Steve Lombardi** beat **Jim Powers** ... **Tatanka** beat **Doink the Clown** by disqualification ... **Virgil** beat **Reno Riggins** ... **Irwin R. Schyster** defeated **Kamala** by countout ... **Bob Backlund** beat **Damian Demento** ... **The Undertaker** defeated **Yokozuna** by disqualification ... **Rick & Scott Steiner** beat **The Beverly Brothers**.
(03-28-93)

—Steve Argintaru

IRELAND

BELFAST—WCW at Kings Hall: **Van Hammer** defeated **Scotty Flamingo** ... **Johnny B. Badd** beat **Vinnie Vegas** ... **Maxx Payne** beat **Cactus Jack** ... U.S. champion **Dustin Rhodes** battled NWA champion **Barry Windham** to a double-countout ... **Davey Boy Smith** beat **Rick Rude** by disqualification ... **Big Van Vader** beat **Michael Hayes** ... World champion **Sting** beat TV champion **Paul Orndorff**.
(03-16-93)

—Colin Bowman

JAPAN

MIYAGI—All Japan Pro Wrestling at the Sports Center: **Doug Furnas & Curt Beyer** beat **Takao Ohmori & The Mighty Inoue** ... **Johnny Ace** beat **The Patriot** ... **Mitsuo Mimota**, **Rusher Kimura**, & **Giant Baba** defeated

Ryuma Izumida, **Haruka Eigen**, & **Masanobu Fuchi** ... **Steve Williams** beat **Davey Boy Smith** ... **Tsuyoshi Kikuchi & Toshiaki Kiwada** defeated **Ron Slinker & The Eagle** ... **Mitsuhara Misawa** beat **Dan Kroffat** ... **Yoshinari Ogawa & Akira Taue** beat **Joel Deaton & Stan Hansen** ... **Kenta Kobashi** battled **Terry Gordy** to a time-limit draw.
(04-07-93)

—Koichi Yoshizawa

FUKUI—All Japan Pro Wrestling at the Gym: **Ron Slinker** beat **Curt Beyer** ... **Mighty Inoue** beat **Masao Inoue** ... **Ryuma Izumida**, **Haruka Eigen**, & **Joel Deaton** beat **Takao Ohmori**, **Shohei Baba**, & **Rusher Kimura** ... **Steve Williams & Terry Gordy** beat **The Eagle & Dan Kroffat** ... **Johnny Ace** pinned **Doug Furnas** ... **Kenta Kobashi** wrestled **The Patriot** to a time-limit draw ... **Stan Hansen** defeated **Davey Boy Smith**.
(03-31-93)

—Koichi Yoshizawa

NAGOYA—20th anniversary of Kyodo Promotions at Rainbow Hall: **Young Lion Shinjiro** defeated **Yuji Nagata** ... **Hiroyoshi Yamamoto** defeated **Tsuremitsa Ishizawa** ... **Manabu Nakanishi** defeated **Satoru Kojima** ... "**Pegasus Kid**" **Chris Benoit** defeated **El Samural** ... **Akira Nogami** defeated **Takayuki Iizuka** ... **Masao Orihara** defeated **Koko Kitihara** ... IWGP junior heavyweight champion **Jushin "Thunder" Liger** retained his title by defeating **Dean Malenko** ... **Masa Chono**, **Riki Choshu**, & **Tatsumi Fujinami** defeated **TNT**, **Hercules**, & **Scott Norton** when **Fujinami** pinned **Norton** ... **Takashi Ishikawa** defeated **Hirofumi Fuyuki** ... **Michiyoshi Ohara** downed **Shinya Hashimoto** ... **Norio Honaga**, **Hiro Saito**, **Tatsutoshi Goto**, **Strong Machine**, & **Ashura Hara** defeated **Sashi Aoyagi**, **Kuniaki Kobayashi**, **Great Kabuki**, **Shiro Koshinaka**, & **Kengo Kimura** when **Hara** pinned **Kimura** ... **The Great Muta** defeated **The Power Warrior**.
(03-21-93)

—Koichi Yoshizawa

PUERTO RICO

CAROLINA—World Wrestling Council at the Municipal Auditorium: Universal champion **Carlos Colon** pinned **Mr. Hughes** ... **Invader I** defeated **The Mountie** ... In a non-title match, **The Dream Warriors** beat tag team champions **Ray Gonzalez & Ricky Santana** ... **El Bronco** defeated **Killer Karl Wallace** ... **Jose Luis Rivera** pinned **Mohammad Hussein** ... **La Ley** beat **The Rattler** ... **Majeanie** pinned **La Tigresa**.
(04-10-93)

—Pablo Soto

SCOTLAND

ABERDEEN—WCW at the Exhibition and Conference Centre: **Johnny B. Badd** defeated **Scotty Flamingo** ... **Van Hammer** beat **Maxx Payne** ... TV champion **Paul Orndorff** defeated **Michael Hayes** ... **Cactus Jack** beat **Vinnie Vegas** ... U.S. champion **Dustin Rhodes** wrestled **Barry Windham** to a double-countout ... World champion **Sting** pinned **Big Van Vader** ... **Davey Boy Smith** defeated **Rick Rude** by disqualification.
(03-14-93)

—Angus McTavish

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

JUNE						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NEW YORK

NEW YORK—WWF at Madison Square Garden: **Danny McShane** pinned **Arnold Skaaland** ... **Miguel Perez** pinned **Fred Atkins** ... **Bobo Brazil** pinned **Skull Murphy** ... **Red Bastien** battled **Billy Darnell** to a time-limit draw ... **Johnny Valentine** battled **Johnny Barend** to a double-disqualification ... WWF champion "**Nature Boy**" **Buddy Rogers** defeated "**Cowboy**" **Bob Ellis**.
(06-23-62)

—PWI archives

TEXAS

HOUSTON—NWA at the Coliseum: **El Pulpo** pinned **Lew Plummer** ... **Emil Dusek** pinned **Chief Little Beaver** ... **Rudy Dusek** defeated **Joe Cox** ... **Everett Marshall** defeated **Ernie Dusek** by disqualification ... **Bronko Nagurski** defeated **Lou Thesz** in a best-of-three-falls match to win the NWA World title.
(06-23-39)

—Houston Chronicle

JAPAN

OMIYA—New Japan/WWF joint card: **Pedro Morales & Peter Maivia** defeated **Antonio Inoki & Seiji Sakaguchi** when **Morales** pinned **Sakaguchi** ... **Tatsumi Fujinami** battled **Chavo Guerrero** to a double-countout ... **Shozo Kobayashi** pinned **Larry Zbyszko** following a backbreaker ... **Haystacks Calhoun** pinned **Kantaro Hoshino** ... **Buffalo Allen** pinned **Osamu Kido** ... **Riki Choshu** pinned **Haruka Eigen** ... **Kotetsu Yamamoto** pinned **Akiyoshi Fujiwara**.
(06-23-78)

—Koichi Yoshizawa

(Continued from page 18)



The only man in the sport who truly cares about the fans is the "immortal" Hulk Hogan.

all deserve special recognition, is there a finishing maneuver in all of wrestling that combines the sublime grace, brilliant strategizing, and sheer force of Mr. Hulk Hogan's legdrop? Please, Bob, let us be serious.

Dear Eddie,

I've enclosed a letter, with stamp, to Paul E. Dangerously. I'm an up-and-coming wrestler and it's very important that Paul E. gets this letter. You're the only person I can trust to deliver it to him. Keep up the great work. Maybe you'll write about me someday if I ever hit it big.

MICHAEL A. DAMPIER
Hot Springs, AR

Dear Michael,

I hear your cry, my son. Trust me when I say Paul E. cannot help you. Only one man in this world cares about you; only one man truly loves you; only one is willing to die for you. His name is Hulk Hogan and it is to He who I have forwarded your heart-felt plea. Don't thank me. My thanks comes in the work I can do here on earth.

Dear Eddie,

Say what you will about the "Narcissist" Lex Luger, but I think he is very close to dominating the wrestling



If "Narcissist" Lex Luger met Hogan in the ring, Luger would lose. I've been wrong about Hogan all these years. He belongs among the pantheon of greats.

world. Some athletes develop later than others. In Luger's case, I think one day the combined influences of Harley Race, Bobby Heenan, and Hiro Matsuda will click in his brain—the only imperfect organ in his entire body—and he will be unbeatable. And if he doesn't put it all together? Well, as men have said for generations, with a body like that, who cares if he can't add?

VAL HOPKINS
Sarasota, FL

Dear Val,

The "Narcissist" is no match for His Eminence, Hulk Hogan. This shall be demonstrated when the two meet in the ring. Afterward, Mr. Hogan will also smite The Undertaker, The Ninja, and the Philistines. At the postmatch reception, He will turn a case of Evian

into a 1983 Cabernet Sauvignon. So let it be written, so let it be done.

Dear Eddie,

The sad thing is that Hulk Hogan limits himself to the ring and the screen. True, athletes and movie stars have tremendous influence in our society, but I think a man of Hogan's vision and intellect could better serve his country filling a political office.

DR. FRED COHEN
Detroit

Dear Dr. Cohen,

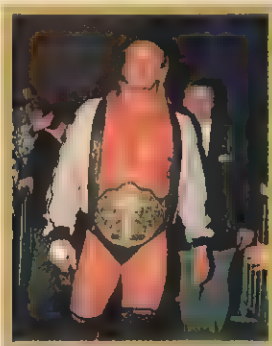
The sooner this campaign kicks off, the better. Enclosed please find one "Hogan/McMahon '96" button, a "Crush Clinton" bumper sticker, and a self-addressed stamped envelope for your generous contribution. Thanks for joining the team. □

THIS MONTH IN...

Wrestler



HULK HOGAN: He won it—
but can he defend it?



BARRY WINDHAM'S NWA:
No Wimps Allowed!

PLUS . . .

JOHNNY B. BADD: All he wants to do is good . . . The lowdown on **LUNA:** Why she is wrestling's most dangerous woman . . . Why "The King" wasn't at The Palace: **JERRY LAWLER** gets shut out of WrestleMania . . . The **VON ERICH—FREEBIRD** feud rages again: "For 20 minutes, it was 1985!"

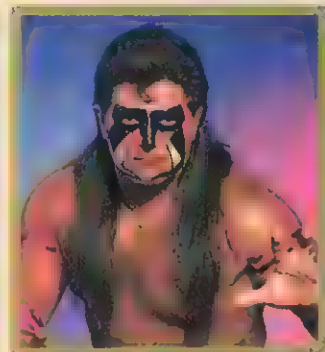
All this—and much more . . .
in the August 1993 issue of
The Wrestler

ON SALE JUNE 15!

Wrestling 93 Rulebreaker



HULK HOGAN'S fifth title reign:
A black eye for wrestling



The 10 best rulebreakers
you've never heard of!

PLUS . . .

Confessions of a former fan favorite:
BRIAN PILLMAN finally speaks
honestly . . . **JIMMY HART** jumps ship:
the desperate act of a managerial failure
. . . Brotherly Hate: The **GILBERTS** have
the guts to settle it like men! . . . **RICK
STEAMBOAT** gets ambushed in an
interview you shouldn't miss!

All this—and much more . . .
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Wrestling 93: Rulebreaker

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ENQUILERA

ANOTHER WWF TITLE FLAP

Hennig's I-C Victory Overturned

By DAVE ROSENBAUM
PHOENIX, AZ—Curt Hennig pinned Shawn Michaels to win the Intercontinental title, only to have the decision overturned by WWF President Jack Tunney.

Hennig pinned Michaels during a TV taping at the America West Arena on April 5, just one day after the men were involved in a brawl in a storage area backstage at WrestleMania IX.

But Tunney, in his second controversial decision in as many days, ruled that the original decision rendered by referee Bill Alfonso—who had been knocked out by Michaels—superseded substitute referee Dave Hebner's pinfall count.

Hennig was awarded the match by disqualification, but had the belt taken away less than 30 minutes after his third I-C title reign apparently began.

Earlier in the day, Tunney validated

Hulk Hogan's controversial World title win over Yokozuna. But this ruling made far more sense.

Michaels was in control of the match early before Hennig rallied and nearly pinned the champion after a forearm to the head. Michaels, sensing trouble, whipped Hennig into Alfonso, knocking out the referee.

As Michaels reached for the I-C belt, Hennig kicked him in the stomach and followed with a "Perfectplex." Hennig rolled up Michaels for the pin just as Hebner arrived on the scene. Hebner counted the pin and awarded the belt to Hennig.

But shortly after Hennig returned to the dressing room, Alfonso recovered and argued with Hebner. They brought their dispute to Tunney, who, after viewing videotape, ruled that the match ended when Michaels knocked out Alfonso.



"Mr. Perfect" Curt Hennig defeated Intercontinental champion Shawn Michaels, but didn't win the title.

Johnny B. Badd Re-Signs With WCW



The flamboyant Johnny B. Badd has decided to stay with WCW for at least three more years.

By **ANDY RODRIGUEZ**

ATLANTA—Johnny B. Badd, the WCW star whose appearances at children's hospitals and charitable functions have made him one of the most popular wrestlers in the world, has reportedly signed a three-year deal with the federation.

Terms of the contract were not announced, but sources told *PWI* that both sides were eager to come to terms.

"Johnny likes it in WCW and WCW likes having him," the source said. "Johnny is really a good-will ambassador for WCW. He makes the federation look good."

Badd freely admits that he is more interested in helping people than he is in furthering his wrestling career.

"But the two are connected," Badd said. "If I'm a success, then I can do more for these kids. And if I'm helping these kids, then it helps me mentally because I know I'm wrestling for somebody."

At press time, Badd was feuding with Shanghai Pierce and trying to break back into the WCW ratings.

Freebirds Reunite At Von Erich Memorial

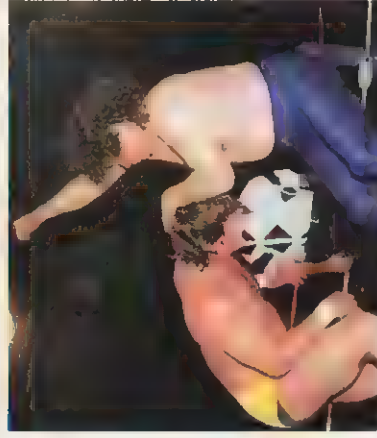
By **BILL APTER**

DALLAS—Michael Hayes and Buddy Roberts, two of the original Fabulous Freebirds who alternately thrilled and shocked fans in the old World Class area, got back together for one night at a benefit card for the daughters of the late Kerry Von Erich.

Roberts and Hayes lost to former arch-rivals Kevin Von Erich and Chris Adams in a bittersweet brawl that brought back memories of the great Freebirds-Von Erich matches at The Sportatorium, the site of this card.

"Let me tell you something, it was great for Buddy Jack and I to be back here," Hayes said. "This place holds a lot of memories, good and bad, but it's too bad we had to come back under these circumstances. Kerry Von Erich was our enemy, but we learned to respect him."

Von Erich committed suicide on February 18. Now, only Kevin Von



Buddy Roberts and Kevin Von Erich resumed the old Freebird-Von Erich rivalry for one night.

Erich is left to carry the torch of this once-great wrestling family, although his father, Fritz Von Erich, also got involved in the action.

Roberts hadn't wrestled in four years and the original Freebirds hadn't been together since the late-1980s, when Hayes formed the new Freebirds with Jimmy Garvin.

Gibson Injures Left Ankle

By **CHRIS BERNUCCA**

PIKEVILLE, KY—The Rock 'n' Roll Express suffered a major setback to their celebrated comeback when Robert Gibson was injured during a nine-man elimination tag team match on April 2.

According to Smoky Mountain Wrestling doctors, Gibson suffered torn ligaments and tendon damage in his left ankle and will be out for four to six weeks.

"This is really frustrating," Gibson said. "We were really wrestling well and I think we were on the verge of beating The Heavenly Bodies. Now it's going to be two months and then I'll have to work my way back into shape."

But don't worry. I'll be back."

Rick Morton, Gibson's teammate, said he doesn't plan on finding a substitute partner for possible title matches against the Bodies.

"It wouldn't be worth it," Morton said. "I can wait for Bobby. He waited for me."

Morton and Gibson teamed with Arn Anderson against The Heavenly Bodies against The Stud Stable. The match, a wild brawl, ended with Prichard pinning Gibson.

"By that time I was hurting badly," Gibson said. "I didn't want to give up earlier, but in retrospect maybe I should have."

AROUND THE GLOBE

NAGOYA, JAPAN

IWGP champion The Great Muta will be sidelined for three months following knee surgery. Muta injured his knee on March 21 in a match against Power Warrior, also known as Kensuke Sasaki. Muta lost the NWA title to Barry Windham at

SuperBrawl III in February, just one month after winning the belt from Masa Chono. Muta also held the NWA TV title in 1989.

MEXICO CITY

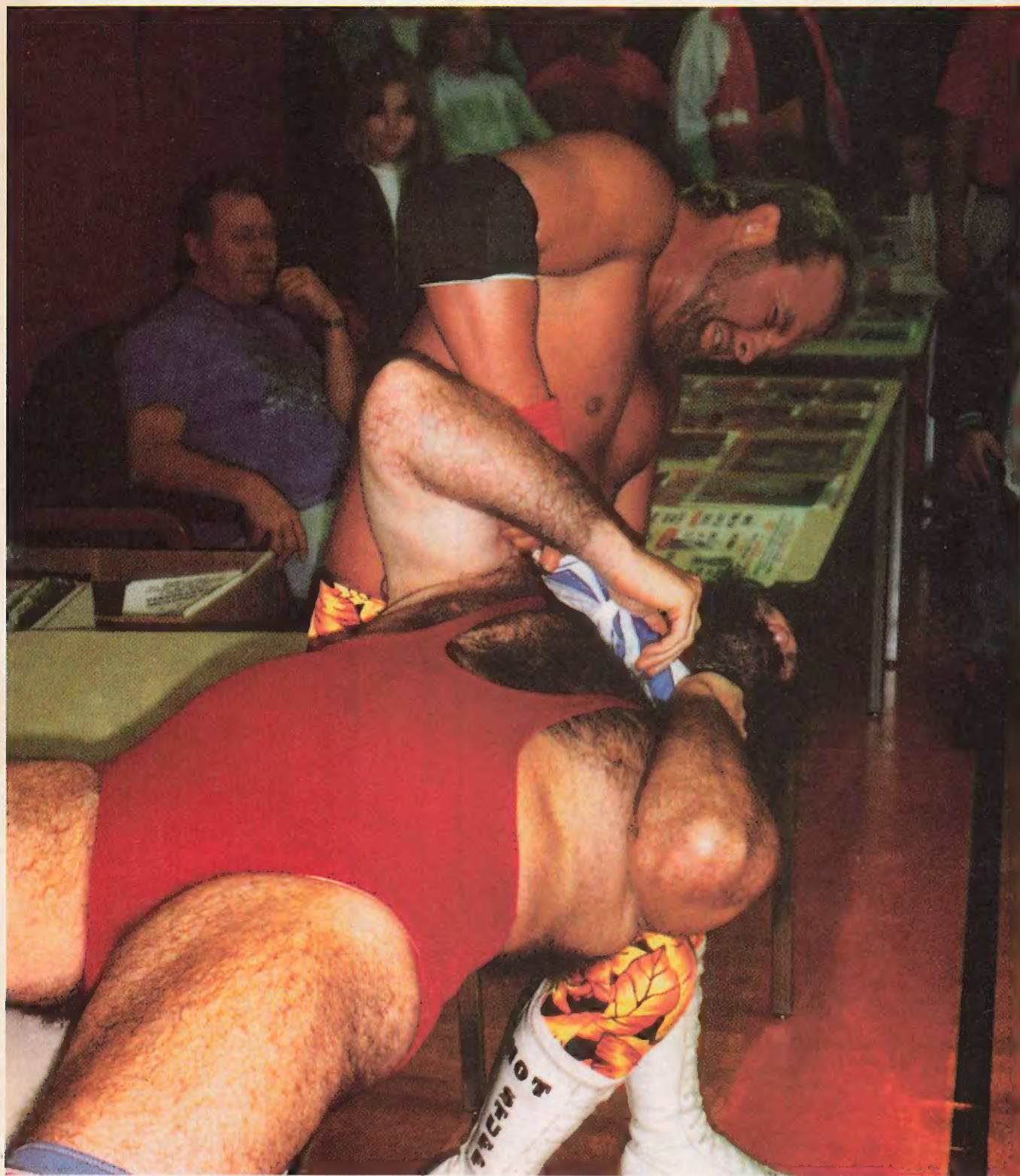
Dr. Wagner Jr. and El Canek defeated Pierroth Jr. and Canadian Vampire Casanova in the final match of a best-of-three series to win the CMLL tag team title on March 26 at Arena Mexico. Wagner scored the pin of Vampire with a splash off the top rope. Although they are rulebreakers, Wagner and Canek were cheered by the crowd. One week later, Wagner took on Pierroth for his CMLL light heavyweight title.

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN

All-Japan Women celebrated its 25th anniversary with its "All-Star Dream Slam" card on April 2 at Yokohama Arena. The 11-match card drew a sellout crowd of over 16,000 and went on for nearly six hours.

Chigusa Nagoyo, the "Hulk Hogan of women's wrestling," returned after a four-year hiatus but lost to longtime rival Devil Masami. In the main event, tag team champions Manami Toyota and Toshiyo Yamada defeated Megumi Kudo and Combat Toyota.

HOT SHOT



If Ray Odyssey ever doubted The Lightning Kid's high-flying prowess, those doubts were put to rest in a big way with this amazing flip off the top rope. Depending on one's perspective, the move demonstrated Kid's courage, or his stupidity. Either way, the former Global light heavyweight champion, who is becoming quite popular in Japan as well, got up so high that he had to be worried he might hit his head on the ceiling. He definitely made Odyssey's odyssey a lot tougher.

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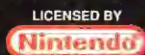
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"The Boy Toy"

